

WINE AND THE WINE LANDS OF THE WORLD

With Some Account of Places Visited

By FRANK HEDGES BUTLER

First Hon. Treasurer, Royal Automobile Club (1897); Founder of the Royal Aero Club (1901); Founder of the Imperial Institute Orchestral Society (1894)

Author of "Five Thousand Miles in a Balloon" (1907); "Through Lapland with Skis and Reindeer" (1917); "Fifty Years of Travel by Land, Water and Air" (1920); "Round the World" (1924)

WITH 55 ILLUSTRATIONS

T. FISHER UNWIN LTD.

(Ernest Benn Ltd.)

BOUVERIE HOUSE, 154 FLEET ST., E.C.4

First published in 1926

*Made and Printed in Great Britain by
Hazell, Watson & Viney Ltd. London and Aylesbury*

CONTENTS

| CHAPTER | PAGE |
|--|------|
| I. WINE AND THE BIBLE | 17 |
| II. WINE AND HEALTH | 26 |
| III. THE GRAPE OF OLD | 31 |
| IV. WINES OF PORTUGAL: PORT . . . | 37 |
| V. WINES OF SPAIN: SHERRY . . . | 46 |
| VI. WINES OF FRANCE: CHAMPAGNE . . | 52 |
| VII. WINES OF FRANCE: BURGUNDY . . | 63 |
| VIII. WINES OF FRANCE: BORDEAUX . . | 76 |
| IX. WINES OF GERMANY | 87 |
| X. WINES OF ITALY AND SICILY . . . | 95 |
| XI. WINES OF HUNGARY, CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND YUGOSLAVIA | 101 |
| XII. WINES OF MADEIRA AND THE CANARIES | 105 |
| XIII. WINES OF CYPRUS, PALESTINE AND GREECE | 109 |
| XIV. WINES OF ALGERIA, TUNIS AND MOROCCO | 113 |
| XV. WINES OF RUSSIA | 117 |
| XVI. WINES OF SOUTH AFRICA | 119 |
| XVII. WINES OF AUSTRALIA | 127 |
| XVIII. WINES OF KASHMIR | 131 |
| XIX. WINES OF THE ARGENTINE AND CHILE . | 136 |

| CHAPTER | PAGE |
|--|------|
| XX. RESTRICTIVE LAWS IN CANADA, NORWAY AND SWEDEN | 140 |
| XXI. BRANDY: COGNAC AND JONZAC | 146 |
| XXII. "WINE" OF SCOTLAND: WHISKY | 150 |
| XXIII. THE STORY OF IRISH WHISKEY | 161 |
| XXIV. THE WEST INDIES: RUM AND BACARDI | 167 |
| XXV. ENGLISH ALE, CYDER AND PERRY, GIN | 173 |
| XXVI. CHARTREUSE AND BÉNÉDICTINE D.O.M. | 180 |
| XXVII. JAPAN: SAKÉ AND THE GEISHA | 186 |
| XXVIII. THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS: KAVA | 194 |
| XXIX. CEREMONIAL DRINKING: TOASTS AND SENTIMENTS | 197 |
| XXX. DRINKING SONGS AND VERSES | 208 |
| XXXI. FASHION IN WINE | 219 |
| XXXII. THE WINE LANDS FROM THE AIR | 284 |
| XXXIII. VINTAGES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY | 246 |
| INDEX | 265 |

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| FRANK HEDGES BUTLER | <i>Frontispiece</i> |
| | FACING PAGE |
| ANDALUSIAN OX-CART, OLD STYLE | 17 |
| JOY OF THE VINTAGE ¹ | 20 |
| WINE SKINS OF MADEIRA | 24 |
| ON STONY GROUND | 31 |
| Oporto QUAY | 37 |
| MANY SORTS OF GRAPES GO TO THE MAKING OF ALL FINE PORTS | 38 |
| PROCESSION OF VINTAGERS, WITH MUSIC, ON THE WAY TO THE WINE-PRESS, ALTO DOURO, PORTUGAL | 40 |
| FEET AND LEGS WASHED SCRUPULOUSLY CLEAN, THE WINE-TREADERS OF THE ALTO DOURO LIGHTEN THEIR TOIL WITH MUSIC OF FIFE, DRUM AND ACCORDION | 42 |
| YOKE OF OXEN, WITH BELLS, SETTING OUT FROM THE LODGE WITH A PIPE OF FINE PORT FOR THE ENGLISH MARKET | 44 |
| SHERRY GRAPES, BROUGHT IN FROM THE VINEYARD ON DONKEY, MULE OR HORSEBACK, ARE LAID OUT IN THE SUN ON MATS TO DRY THOROUGHLY BEFORE PRESSING | 46 |
| AFTER DRYING IN THE SUN, THE MATS OF GRAPES ARE CARRIED INDOORS AND TIPPED INTO THE TROUGHS TO BE TRODDEN (SHERRY COUNTRY) | 48 |

| | |
|--|-------|
| WHEN THE SHERRY GRAPES HAVE BEEN TRODDEN OUT, THE PULP IS SQUEEZED IN A HAND-PRESS | 50 |
| MAP OF THE CHAMPAGNE DISTRICT | p. 53 |
| THE FATHER OF CHAMPAGNE | 54 |
| EARLY MORNING IN THE CÔTE D'OR, BURGUNDY . | 63 |
| THE BURGUNDIANS TREAT THEIR GRAPES WITH REVERENCE | 64 |
| PRECIOUS WINE-GRAPES OF THE CÔTE D'OR, BUR- GUNDY | 66 |
| PUBLIC SALE OF THE YEAR'S PRODUCE OF WINE, LES HOSPICES DE BEAUNE, BURGUNDY . . . | 68 |
| WHEN THE PICKER'S HAND-BASKET IS FULL SHE TIPS IT INTO THE CARRIER'S HOD; HE TIPS HIS LOAD INTO A TUB ON THE BULLOCK-CART, AND SO TO THE PRESS-HOUSE (BORDEAUX WINE COUNTRY) | 76 |
| THE SLOW-MOVING BULLOCK-CART BRINGS THE GRAPES IN GREAT TUBS FROM THE VINEYARDS TO THE PRESS-HOUSE (BORDEAUX WINE COUNTRY) | 78 |
| CRUSHING THE GRAPES THROUGH A SIEVE TO SEPA- RATE THEM FROM THE STALKS | 80 |
| TREADING THE GRAPES AT A BORDEAUX CHÂTEAU | 82 |
| VINTAGE AT RÜDESHEIM ON THE RHINE, WHERE THE SLOPES FACE ALMOST SOUTH | 88 |
| PICKING GRAPES IN THE SNOW (HOCK COUNTRY) . | 90 |
| VINEYARD ON THE MOSELLE (GRAACH) | 92 |
| ITALIAN WINE-CART ON THE VIA APPIA, NEAR ROME | 95 |

| | |
|--|--------|
| FINE MARSALA PATIENTLY MATURING IN A MAGNIFICENT VAULT OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS OLD, MARSALA, SICILY | 98 |
| HARVEST OF FINE GRAPES, CAMA DE LOBOS, ISLAND OF MADEIRA | 105 |
| MADEIRA WINE-PRESS OVER 150 YEARS OLD AND STILL IN GOOD SERVICE | 106 |
| EVERY MAN HIS OWN WINE-MAKER | 114 |
| GOVERNMENT WINE FARM, GROOT CONSTANTIA | 120 |
| <i>By courtesy of the South African Railways</i> | |
| "AND THEY BARE IT BETWEEN TWO UPON A STAFF" | 124 |
| <i>By courtesy of the South African Railways</i> | |
| GRAPE HARVEST | 124 |
| <i>By courtesy of the South African Railways</i> | |
| BULLOCK CART WITH PIPE OF PORT ON THE HILLY ROADS NEAR OPORTO, PORTUGAL | 128 |
| SMILING VINTAGERS OF THE ALTO DOURO, PORTUGAL | 128 |
| "OUR WINE FOR YOUR FISH" | 140 |
| A NORWEGIAN WHISKY PRESCRIPTION | p. 143 |
| THE OLD WELL, LES HOSPICES DE BEAUNE, BURGUNDY | 148 |
| REPLENISHING A VAT OF OLD SCOTCH WHISKY IN A WEST-END WINE MERCHANT'S CELLAR. | 156 |
| CAPARISONED HORSES OF CHÂTEAU LAFITE (CLARET COUNTRY) | 167 |
| A SON OF LUSITANIA | 167 |
| THE LAST LAP | 178 |
| AT REST; A VAULT UNDER THE PAVEMENT, REGENT STREET, LONDON | 178 |

| | FACING PAGE |
|--|---------------|
| ORPHANS OF LES HOSPICES DE BEAUNE, BURGUNDY | 184 |
| TA-ŪE OR PLANTING THE RICEFIELDS (JAPAN) | <i>p.</i> 187 |
| THE BRIDE SIPS SAKÉ. | 188 |
| THE LAND OF THE KAVA DRINKERS: TAHITI (SOUTH SEA ISLANDS) | 194 |
| THE WINE TASTERS | 208 |
| <i>From an old colour print</i> | |
| OLD-TIME TRANSPORT IN THE SHERRY COUNTRY . | 219 |
| A HARD CORK | 224 |
| <i>From an old engraving</i> | |
| FOUNDERS OF THE ROYAL AERO CLUB. . . . | 234 |
| THE FIRST AIR-MAN | 240 |
| MALAGA, SPAIN | 242 |
| CASTLE OF ST. BARBARA, ALICANTE (SPANISH WINE COUNTRY) | 244 |

WINE AND THE WINE
LANDS OF THE WORLD

CHAPTER I

WINE AND THE BIBLE

Drunkenness is an immoderate affection and use of drink. That I call immoderation that is besides or beyond that order of good things for which God hath given us the use of drink.—JEREMY TAYLOR (1613–1667).

IN Scripture we read much about the use and the abuse of wine. Yet it is noteworthy that, search the Bible as we may, nowhere do we find the slightest trace of that condemnation of wine *per se* which the diatribes of the fanatics might lead us to expect.

Excess in wine, like other excesses, is always sternly discountenanced, but wine itself is clearly regarded as a beneficent gift to man and a legitimate source of comfort, sustenance and cheer in his earthly pilgrimage.

In this matter, as in so many others, the tendency of science at the present day is to confirm the teachings of Holy Writ. The outcome of the various forms of study and research which scientists have eagerly pursued has been that in almost all cases the highest and most learned exponents pronounce in favour of wine as a stimulant and a valuable tonic, when taken in moderation.

Unfortunately, there are some weak-minded people who debase themselves by taking it to excess. This, however, is not the fault of the wine; the blame is upon the folly and weakness of those contemptible persons, who should be taught to

18 WINE AND WINE LANDS OF THE WORLD

control themselves. It is not fair that they who take wine in moderation, "for strength, and not for drunkenness,"¹ should be denied its benefits by others' abuse of it.

Teetotallers, blue ribbonites, prohibitionists and suchlike faddists would have us believe that the wines mentioned in Scripture were *non*-alcoholic. If they would study their Bibles, or use a little common sense, they might lighten their darkness upon the subject.

Wine is always associated with gladness of heart, but how, pray, could that be if it lacked the genial alcohols which the wholesome fruit juice naturally develops for its preservation, and from which alone it derives its power to cheer?

Let me say, however, that the wine mentioned in Scripture is in all cases the natural juice of the grape, naturally fermented, as wine must be unless it has been specially treated to check fermentation. There is no reason for supposing that any such treatment was practised or even known in Scriptural times. Wine, in the Bible, never denotes "spirits," which are the product of distillation.

If wine had not been good for man, is it likely that God would have put it into the heart of Noah in those early days, thousands of years before Christ, to plant a vineyard, or that Christ's *first* miracle on earth should have been the turning of water into wine?

Wine is mentioned 155 times in the Old Testament, and 10 times in the New Testament, as a drink. Indeed, in almost every book of the Bible, wine

¹ Eccles. x. 17.

or vineyards are alluded to either in the direct or in the figurative sense.

The first mention is in the ninth chapter of the first book, Genesis. Noah planted a vineyard,¹ and, not knowing the strength of the wine nor his own capacity of resistance, took more than was good for him. Probably, like other great experimentalists, he learnt wisdom by his experience and thereafter took his wine in moderation. As we read in the same chapter that Noah lived to be 950 years old before he died, or only 19 years less than Methuselah, it is apparent that wine did not unduly shorten his life; indeed, we may well conclude that, using it moderately, the aged patriarch felt the benefit of its comforting warmth and life-giving power, and even lived the longer for it.

A little later in the same book wine is mentioned a second time. That was when Abraham with 318 men made his magnificent pursuit of the four kings, 120 miles up-country from Hebron to Dan, and routed them in a night attack, rescuing his brother Lot, the captives, and the loot. All the countryside came out to acclaim the returning conqueror, "and Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God."²

The sacred place which was accorded to wine very early in the history of the Israelitish people is evident from its use in almost all their sacrifices.

The Feast of Tabernacles, one of the three great solemnities of the year, at which all males

¹ Gen. ix. 20.

² *Ibid.*, xiv. 14-18.

were obliged to appear before the Lord, was celebrated just after harvest, and was designed to return thanks to God for the fruits of the earth—"thy corn and thy wine"—then gathered in. The feast continued for seven days, and was an occasion of great rejoicing. Sacrifices were offered day by day, and every animal, save the goat for the sin offering, was imbrued with its due measure of wine—half a hin for each bullock, one third of a hin for a ram, and one quarter for a lamb. As a hin measured about six of our quarts, it is easy to calculate that during the whole festival more than 120 gallons of wine, or about the equivalent of a pipe of Port, were poured out before the Lord.¹

Every day throughout the year the minimum of wine ever used in the sacred offices was three quarts, for the continual burnt offering. No inferior or diluted wine was allowed, and the libation seems to have been poured over the sacrifice as it was being burnt upon the altar, according to the ordinance: "In the holy place shalt thou cause the strong wine to be poured unto the Lord for a drink offering."² The first pressings of the vintage were allotted to the Levites, the priestly caste, for their own personal consumption.³

No such perverse ideas as an abstaining priesthood—except during the actual service of the tabernacle—or the inherent contamination of wine find a place in the divine ordinance. The Nazarite (man or woman)⁴ who, in pursuance of his special vow, separated himself from wine and strong drink,

¹ Num. xxix. 12 *et seq.*; Deut. xvi. 13.

³ Deut. xviii. 4.

² Num. xxviii. 7.

⁴ Num. vi. 2.

vinegar, grapes and raisins, shaving and hair-cutting, was inflicting voluntarily a rigorous penance upon himself. The fact that he was holy unto the Lord during the period of his abstention did not at all imply that the things from which he abstained were impious; his sanctity lay in his separation from human things, as so typified, and his hypothecation to the divine. On the termination of his period of devotion, he shaved his head in public and resumed the use of wine.

The "vinegar of wine" of the early Israelites was a light, sharp wine of low alcoholic strength, which was used for quenching thirst and supplying moisture to the body during heavy labour. It was a common drink in the harvest fields. "At meal-time come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar," said Boaz of Bethlehem to Ruth the Moabitess, great-grandmother of King David.¹ Wine such as this became the regulation drink of Roman soldiers on the march, and to this day the Spaniards and Italians drink it freely at harvest time, just as the English harvesters used to drink the "small beer" provided *ad libitum* by the farmers of former days.

This was probably the class of light wine of which King Solomon was to furnish 20,000 baths to Hiram, King of Tyre, for his servants, the hewers, who cut the timber of Lebanon for the Temple.² As a bath was a measure containing about 6 gallons of liquid, 20,000 baths would be equal roughly to 120,000 gallons, say 1,000 pipes. But as there were 80,000 hewers of timber, 70,000

¹ Ruth ii. 14.

² 2 Chron. ii. 10.

bearers, and 3,600 overseers, or in all 153,600 men employed upon the work, it was not a very large allowance per man after all. The narrative conveys a vivid impression of the enormous production of wine in Solomon's splendid little kingdom at this the pinnacle of Israelitish prosperity.

Wine in those parts, and at that period of history, was not a luxury, but a vital necessity. It was the drink of the country and an article of everyday use, though then as now, no doubt, there were many varieties of it, some much better than others. The wine of ceremony was of finer quality than the ordinary table wine of the people. When we read that all King Solomon's drinking vessels were of pure gold, we may properly infer that they were fashioned to hold a noble liquor—"the best wine . . . that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak."¹ These were the vessels in which Belshazzar of Babylon, his princes, his wives and his concubines, drank wine at the fatal feast, while Darius the Median was knocking at the gate.²

So, later on, we read of "royal" wine being served at a Persian court banquet in vessels of gold, each different from the other.³ The "banquet of wine"⁴ at which Queen Esther petitioned the King for her people may indicate that stage of the banquet, after the removal of the meats, when the rich dessert wines were tasted.

From a passage in Proverbs it seems possible that a sparkling wine was made from grapes in those

¹ Song of Songs vii. 9.

² Dan. v.

³ Esther i. 7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, v. 6; vii. 2.

days, perhaps a wine similar to the pink Champagne of to-day. "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright,"¹ suggests an effervescence in the wine.

The humane admonition, "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish,"² no doubt indicates some sort of cordial made of strong wine mixed with spices, herbs, flavourings, essences or drugs to increase its power. Such drinks apparently were given to criminals before their execution, in order to stupefy them and deaden their sense of pain, just as, before the introduction of anæsthetics, patients were heavily dosed with brandy before an operation.

At one time, so we are told, there were certain charitable women in Jerusalem who devoted themselves to this work, even as, in Inquisition times, it was a kindly act to hang a bag of gunpowder round the neck of a man who was burning at the stake. Wine mingled with myrrh was offered to Christ before His crucifixion, but our Saviour's fortitude was proof against any such mitigation of the sufferings which He had resolved to undergo.³

The vessels in which wine was kept and distributed were no doubt a large kind of bag or bottle, made from goat-skins or leather firmly sewed and pitched. To this day the Arabs pull the skins off goats, as we do off rabbits, then sew up the places where the legs and tail were cut off, leaving one for the neck of the bottle. Wine skins are still used in the island of Madeira. A bottle of this

¹ Prov. xxiii. 31.

² *Ibid.*, xxxi. 6.

³ Mark xv. 23.

kind would hold a fairly large quantity, so that Abigail's present to David of "two bottles of wine"¹ for 400 men was not so inadequate as might appear.

In Joshua we read of these leathern bottles, "old, and rent, and bound up," being carried by the Hivites of Gibeon on their fraudulent peace mission to the great Israelitish commander-in-chief.² Christ's remark about new wine breaking or bursting old (leathern) bottles³ has relation to the alcoholic strength of the wine and to the natural gas produced by its fermentation; we also get an interesting glimpse of the value attached to these matured old vessels.

Though the making of glass⁴ was known to the ancients, glass bottles for holding wine do not seem to have been used. Vessels of stone, however, were used in ancient days for storing liquids, as witness the large stone waterpots at the wedding-feast of Cana in Galilee.⁵ As these six pots contained two or three firkins apiece, the quantity which our Saviour in the warmth of His heart presented to the wedding guests on that memorable occasion amounted, by present-day reckoning, to something like 900 bottles of the best wine! For it is very evident from the gratified remark of the ruler of the feast, the wine-taster—"Thou hast kept the good wine until now"—that this wine was far better in quality than what was usually drunk.

¹ 1 Sam. xxv. 18.

² Joshua ix. 4, 13.

³ Matt. ix. 17; Mark ii. 22; Luke v. 37.

⁴ The Egyptians of the Old Kingdom (first to sixth dynasties) were probably the inventors of glass.

⁵ John ii. 6.

The custom in those days, contrariwise to our own, was to serve the better wine first; then, when the guests were in high good humour and less disposed to be critical, the weaker and cheaper wine was substituted. When the Saviour, with delicate regard for decorum, orders the fresh wine of His miraculous creation to be carried first to the responsible official, He is well aware that this man's judgment will be correct, for the ruler of the feast could not perform his duties properly unless he were strictly abstemious.

Christ's observation in another place that "no man having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better,"¹ indicates that quality was as much sought after and appreciated as it is now.

St. Paul well knew the value of wine as a food and a tonic when he admonished his "son Timothy" to "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities"²—surely a strange interpolation in a doctrinal discourse, unless the apostle considered it a matter of vital importance, as he obviously did. St. Paul's advice is as good to-day as it was when it was written eighteen and a half centuries ago.

Just as our Lord's first miracle on earth was the turning of water into wine, so His last gift on earth to His disciples at His Last Supper with them was a cup of wine, of which He bade them all partake in remembrance of Him.³

¹ Luke v. 39.

² 1 Tim. v. 23.

³ Luke xxii. 17.

CHAPTER II

WINE AND HEALTH

Come, come : good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used.—*Othello*, II. 3.

DURING my travels of thousands of miles—many times round the world—part of my work has been to taste the wines, spirits and liqueurs of the wine lands of the earth. From personal observation and experience, I can sing the praises of wine as a food to mankind.

Wine is a natural product of the soil. It is nourishing, comforting and wholesome.

Like all alimentary substances, wine must be consumed with the moderation which is natural to civilised men and women. To drink too much wine is as bad as eating or drinking too much of anything else. One should not lay the blame on wine because some people do not know how to drink it moderately.

The old French proverb which advises men of sixty to “beware of a good cook and a young wife,” says nothing at all about a good cellar ; we are left to infer that experience has shown the latter to be beneficial, or at least free from the peril attaching to the other two.

If wine were injurious, the fact would have been discovered long ago in regions where the vine has been cultivated for centuries. As a matter of fact, it is well known and recognised that this is

not so. On the contrary, it is easy to prove that wine contributes to health and long life, and is the best means of preventing alcoholism, with all its disastrous consequences. In wine-growing districts drunkenness is quite exceptional, alcoholism is kept in check, and the use of drugs is unknown; the people know how to drink in moderation and recognise wine as a source of good humour and a safeguard against epidemics.

Prohibition in civilised countries, even if carried by a universal vote, would be a vast mistake, being contrary to the laws of nature and the permanent interest of the race.

Wine is undoubtedly a food, and in many countries it is vital to the well-being of the people. In France, for example, Claret has been for generations past not only a beverage pure and simple, but a powerful factor in the assimilation of nutriment, which without its aid would often unduly tax the digestive organs. Wine also lessens the need for nitrogenous food, such as meat. It was mainly as a food that the French military authorities during the Great War requisitioned the equivalent of 792,000,000 bottles of wine for the troops. This is about thirteen times the total amount of all wines consumed in England yearly.

Even the artisans of England are now realising the great food-value possessed by many high-priced wines, of which the public-houses sell large quantities, principally to people of the working class who are earning high wages.

Many of the best qualities of wines—Champagne, for example—in addition to possessing high food-

value, render very important service in medicine ; they save the patient suffering, and frequently prolong life, while the comfort they give cannot be estimated. To call wine a luxury in such circumstances is most unfair.

The Army Medical Staff, with their long and intensive experience, are under no illusion as to the value of wine in hospital practice. During the Crimean War, in 1854, my firm shipped a quantity of wines and spirits to Miss Florence Nightingale at the Scutari Hospital for the use of our wounded soldiers. And during the Boer War, in 1899-1900, the firm shipped more than one hundred thousand bottles of Port wine to South Africa, under War Office contract, besides other wines and spirits, for hospital use.

In tropical countries alcohol has saved many lives from destruction by dysentery and cholera, not to speak of snake and insect bites and stings. Even at home, when it has unfortunately happened that persons have been poisoned by eating oysters at public banquets, it has constantly been revealed at the inquest that guests who took alcohol with their oysters have felt no ill effects, while others who took no alcohol have died.

The moderate use of wine is not hostile to longevity, but rather conduces to it by reason of the enhanced vigour and the evenness of mind which comes from wine. In witness of this, perhaps I may be permitted to mention an instance which is not necessarily exceptional, but for which I can personally vouch.

My brother James, who celebrated his eighty-sixth

birthday in 1926, is head of a family of fifteen brothers and sisters, of whom ten survive, their ages being 86, 85, 83, 76, 75, 73, 71, 68, 67, 64, a combined total of 748 years. This family of ours has always been accustomed to drink wine in moderation, and it would hardly seem that the practice has shortened our lives unduly. Our maternal grandfather, William Hedges, who died at the age of 85, never mixed his wines, but drank every day an imperial pint of Port of the celebrated vintages of either 1820, 1834, 1847 or 1863.

NOTE.—That wine, which gave cheerfulness and endurance to the troops and strength to the wounded and the sick, was found no less salutary in the troublous time at home, may be inferred from the fact that during the War the firm supplied wines to scores of London Clubs, frequented by war-strained soldiers and civilians, both men and women, who had learned in stress how wine can aid the human body and spirit, such as the following: Albemarle, Alpine, American Women's, Argentine, Army and Navy, Arts, Athenæum, Bath, Brooks's, Caledonian, Carlton, Cavendish, City Carlton, Conservative, East India United Service, Embassy, Green Room, Guards', Hurlingham, Junior Athenæum, Junior Conservative, Junior Naval and Military, Junior United Service, Ladies' Carlton, Lyceum, National Club, Naval and Military, New Oxford and Cambridge, New University, Officers' Club (Aldershot), Oriental, Phyllis Court, Pioneer, Ranelagh, Reform, Royal Aero, Royal Air Force, Royal Automobile, Royal London Yacht, Royal Southern Yacht, Royal Thames Yacht, St. James's, St. Stephen's, Savage, Sports, Swedish, Travellers', Turf, Union, United Service, United University; also to the House of Commons, the Staff College (Camberley), the Royal Military College (Sandhurst), and many others.

CHAPTER III

THE GRAPE OF OLD

Bacchus opens the gate of the heart.—HORACE.

IN the abyss of immeasurable antiquity, when this earth was still preparing for the advent of man, the grape-vine flourished. Plentiful traces of it—tendril, leaf and pip—are found in the oldest strata of the earth's crust. They tell us as surely as spoken words that the vine is more ancient by far than man himself. When man came, he found the banquet of the grape already set for his enjoyment.

The use of the grape as a food preceded the making of wine. Primitive man, who lived by the chase and on wild fruits, gathered and ate with relish the grapes of wild vines long before he discovered that he could make a joyous beverage out of them. As time rolled on and life became more settled, he took in the grape-vine from the wilderness and gave it cultivation. Then, perhaps, began the selection of the finest and best-flavoured grapes, and, presently, the propagation of strains.

That the plant was tended and painstakingly developed by ingenious man at some remote period of which we have no record is apparent to the horticulturist. For every modern grape carries within itself its own patent of ancient lineage and progressive ennoblement. Take seeds from the finest grape in cultivation and raise vines from them. The vines will bear fruit, but the fruits,

with the rarest exceptions, will have no resemblance to the parent grape; they will hark back to a primitive, undeveloped and much inferior type—the type of some far-distant ancestor. Left to itself, deprived of man's ceaseless, thoughtful care, the grape-vine would revert speedily, helplessly, ignominiously, to the status of its wild progenitor.

How far from its primitive state the vine had advanced in the early days of Biblical history we may gather from the account of the grapes of the Promised Land. Moses, having brought the Children of Israel to the wilderness of Paran, sent out twelve men to spy out the land of Canaan. These men “came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with *one cluster* of grapes, and *they bare it between two upon a staff.*”¹ According to Biblical chronology, this was 1,490 years before Christ.

Dried grapes or raisins were a familiar and much esteemed article of diet in that sun-drenched clime. A hundred clusters of raisins formed a part of the gifts which Abigail brought to David,² and with two clusters of raisins, bread, water, and caked figs—campaigners' fare—David's men revived the young Egyptian whom they found in the field and who, thus invigorated, guided them to the slaughter of the Amalekite raiders.³ The grapes known to the Children of Israel at this time must have been very beautiful and luscious, for in the Song of Solomon the breasts of the lovely Shulamite are compared to clusters of grapes.⁴

¹ Num. xiii. 23, 24.

³ 1 Sam. xxx. 11.

² 1 Sam. xxv. 18.

⁴ Song of Solomon vii. 7.

Fruit culture was assiduously practised by the ancient Hebrews, for Ecclesiastes speaks of orchards and gardens and plantations of fruit trees. These gardens, called *pardes*, were so well planted and so well kept that the word *pardes*, from which "paradise" is derived, was used to express a beautiful and delightful spot.

In the Homeric poem, too, gardens are mentioned. In the garden of Alcinous are cultivated fine grapes of various kinds :

"There flourishes a fertile and luxuriant vine,
Whose clusters in part are dried by the sun
In the more open and airy places, and elsewhere
They are gathered by hand from the leafy stalk,
Or pressed out by the feet in the great vats ;
Sour are the grapes here, there fragrant are the blossoms,
And the grapes are purple and gold." ¹

The gardens of Babylon were celebrated, and so was that one which Cyrus planted at Sardis, in Lydia, and which excited the wonder of Lysander, the Greek envoy.

Gardens were also cultivated by the Romans in ancient times. Tarquin the Proud was in the garden when he sent his son the order to kill the most distinguished among the Gabii. With the growth of power and riches among the Romans, gardens were regarded as of the highest importance as pleasure resorts and producers of delicate fruits, and in them the grape-vine held an important place. Grapes were always served at banquets at the "second table," which corresponded more or less to our dessert.

¹ *Odyssey*, vii. 124.

The invasion of the barbarians marked the decline of gardens and orchards. Grape culture underwent a long period of decadence, at the end of which it was resumed principally for the purpose of making wine. Table grapes were grown for the personal use of the master rather than for commerce, and so it was until quite recent times.

Pips of the wild grape discovered in mass among the remains of Neolithic man suggest that even so long ago our primitive forbears pressed the abundant fruit of nature's vintage and drank its juice. It is easy to imagine the scene. The year has been perfect—a frostless spring, good early rains, long summer sunshine and strong heat for the ripening. The vines are bowed down with innumerable clusters of downy golden fruit—a feast of grapes for all, and more than enough. The surplus is put by in a heap or stored in some crude receptacle; the juice exudes, collects, is good to taste. Ready hands complete the pressing.

Part of the juice is set by for the morrow, when haply a mammoth hunt claims sudden attention, or a raid for a wife, and the *cuvée réservée* is forgotten. After a space of days the absent-minded Neolith returns, and presently bethinks him of his grape-juice. Incontinent he stoops to drink, drinks deep, and quickly finds that during his absence a curious change has come over his treasured store; by no mortal agency the mild, innocuous fluid has been transformed into a miraculous draught which exalts him as never man was exalted before. His fatigue is gone, his heart bounds; he laughs, sings, dances, calls his friends. They also drink and feel the

instant flush of comfort, gladness, kindliness, courage, buoyancy and strength. Infused with sympathy and mutual understanding beyond all previous experience, they drink together, praising the god, until that wondrous First Vintage is exhausted.

Whether the great thing happened in this fanciful wise or not, we cannot know. Nor, in these sceptical days, must we accept the view of the early commentator that wine is a liquor so generally useful and agreeable that "it could scarcely be unknown even to Adam himself!" But this we may assert with confidence, that the discovery of natural fermentation was the greatest step ever made in the upward progress of the human race. Wherefore, First Wine-maker, *Skaal!* Illimitable benefactor of mankind, may your spirit dwell for ever in the delectable vineyards of Paradise!

It is not to be doubted that man, having made his astounding discovery, pursued it with assiduity through the hidden ages. Of how he experimented and how he toiled, of his disappointments and his triumphs, we know nothing. All we know is that when the earliest recorded civilisation breaks upon our vision wine-growing is already an established and well-developed art, emanating, some consider, from Persia.

The pictured tombs of the Egyptian kings tell us that vineyards were kept and wine systematically made therefrom thousands of years before Christ. Excavation in Mesopotamia has brought to light indisputable evidence that wine was a common article of commerce in Babylon 2,250 years before

Christ. The aroma of wine pervades the Bible from beginning to end. Wine and gods of wine haunt the world's mythologies. In ancient Homer the wine-bowl flows continually. The matchless civilisations of Greece and Rome were nourished upon wine, and hoary China, in the days of her brilliant achievements in art, science and philosophy, was a wine-drinking country.

When the barbarians burst into the Roman Empire and overran it the culture of the grape declined, as I have said, but only to revive in greater glory when the sun of civilisation rose again upon mankind. Missionary and monk kept the torch alight through the Dark Ages, carrying the vine with them wherever they went, planting vineyards, making wine. To them our everlasting gratitude!

In the Middle Ages the Saracen, and later on the Turk, again destroyed many of earth's fairest vineyards. But the Saracen wilted and the Turk has, in effect, been driven out of Europe. The vine again holds sway from the Maritza to the Loire, from Tarifa to Tokay.

Life is a struggle; there would be no purpose in it if it were not. Peoples who, appalled by the ravages of alcohol misused, have flinched from the battle, and to save themselves, as they fondly hope, have prohibited alcohol altogether, have suffered in the long run for their cowardice by sinking into stagnation. There are no short cuts to human progress; you have to fight it out—there is no other way.

CHAPTER IV

WINES OF PORTUGAL: PORT

THE vines planted in Portugal originally came from the Burgundy district of France; Port and Burgundy may, therefore, be called "first cousins." Port is, in a sense, the most English of wines, because had there been no Englishmen there would have been no Port. It was the English merchants of Oporto who developed the vineyards of the Douro to supply the English fleet with wine in the old days of sail, and it was they who created a wine to please the English taste and suit the English climate. The Portuguese do not drink Port as we know it in England.

Port was almost unknown in England before 1703, when it was first shipped here at a low rate of duty under the famous Methuen Treaty, which stood for 130 years, until its abrogation in 1835. Considering the part which this noble wine has played in English life and literature during two centuries past, the compact made with our traditional oldest ally in the reign of good Queen Anne is worthy of reprint:

THE METHUEN TREATY

[Signed December 27, 1703. Abrogated 1835.]

ART. 1.—His sacred royal Majesty of Portugal promises, both in his own name and that of his successors, to admit for

38 WINE AND WINE LANDS OF THE WORLD

ever hereafter, into Portugal, the woollen cloths and the rest of the woollen manufactures of the Britons, as was accustomed until they were prohibited by the laws ; nevertheless, upon this condition :

2.—That is to say, that her sacred Majesty of Great Britain shall, in her own name and that of her successors, be obliged for ever hereafter to admit the wines of the growth of Portugal into Great Britain ; so that at no time, whether there shall be peace or war between the kingdoms of Great Britain and France, anything more shall be demanded for these Wines, by the name of customs or duty, or whatsoever other title, directly or indirectly, whether they shall be imported into Great Britain in pipes or hogsheads, or other casks, than what shall be demanded from the like quantity or measure of French wine, deducting or abating a third part of the custom or duty ; but if at any time this deduction or abatement of customs, which is to be made as aforesaid, shall in any manner be attempted and prejudiced, it shall be just and lawful for his sacred royal Majesty of Portugal again to prohibit the woollen cloths, and the rest of the British woollen manufactures.

3.—The most excellent Lords of the Plenipotentiaries promise and take upon themselves that their above-named masters shall ratify this treaty, and that within the space of two months the ratification shall be exchanged.

Given at Lisbon, the 27th Dec., 1703.

MARCHIS ALEGRETENSIS.

JOHN METHUEN.

There are several ways of going to Portugal. One may travel by the fine Royal Mail steamers from Southampton to Lisbon, or to Vigo in Spain ; by the admirable Booth Line to Oporto and Lisbon ; or by the Sud-Express from Paris, changing trains at Medina for Oporto. The railway journey from Medina del Campo to Oporto is picturesque ; the line runs through a rocky gorge with many tunnels and many mountain torrents plunging towards the Douro river. Olive gardens rise in steep terraces

above the brick-red waters, where flat-bottomed sailing barges with huge steering oars pilot their way down through reefs and shallows. The barges are laden with pipes of Port from Regoa and Pinhão, destined for the various lodges, *armazens* or storehouses in Oporto, the centre of the Port wine trade.

For a view of this beautifully situated city and the sunny valley of the Douro one goes to the Dom Luiz bridge, which crosses the river in a single span of 260 feet. It was near this point that the great Duke of Wellington made the passage of the Douro in 1809, when he forced the French Army under Soult to retreat. The romantic atmosphere of those days still pervades the place, clinging especially to "The Factory," the English wine-shippers' club, which was built by an Englishman in 1785 and possesses many interesting autographs of Wellington and his officers, who stayed there during the Peninsula War. The fine ballroom is quite unchanged, and at a turn of fancy's wand the dashing uniforms and dainty damsels of the Georgian age spring to life and thread the mazy dance as they used to do.

Oporto itself is full of interest. Oxen with covered yokes cart pipes of Port up and down the steep, narrow streets under the balconies of mediæval red-tiled houses. The lumbering wheels turn silently here because the town insists upon it, but as soon as he gets outside the Portuguese waggoner wipes the grease from his axles and the wain goes happily on its way, shrieking to heaven; you can hear them for miles. There is method in

his madness, because the oxen work better with the excruciating noise continually in their ears, and are less likely to be stampeded by some sudden, unfamiliar sound. Some also say that the shriek of the wheels keeps off the wolves and scares the evil spirits, which I can well believe, though I like to hear it myself—at a distance.

Ships of strange build lie at the quays, loading and unloading, while to and fro upon the Douro banks move Portuguese of many types—Lusitanian, Roman, Gothic, Moorish; numbers of the men still wear the flowing whiskers of the Peninsula War period.

Surely there can be no more picturesque place anywhere in which to see the vintage gathered than up-country in the Alto Douro. In the old days we used to ride up on horseback, feeding our steeds on bread and wine. Here, on the terraced slopes of the hills, with the River Douro winding away into the distance and the sunlit mountain tops rising into the blue, one is far indeed from the madding crowd. Of all the wine districts I know, Oporto and the river-country of the Douro more than any other preserve their old-world aspect and tradition. People who live there tell you that the Portuguese is a good workman, but you can't make him *run*. Well, what he may lose in speed he certainly gains in picturesqueness and I for one shall not complain.

The Port vintage on the Douro generally begins about the first week in October and this is the busiest time of all the year. Rise up betimes in the morning and the first sound you will hear is the

guardian with his gun, scaring the early partridge from the ripened grape, which it nevertheless consumes in such quantity that it becomes intoxicated and stupid and loses the power of flight.

At the call of the vintage, which comes at half-past six, old men and old women, young girls and children, spread themselves out under the instructions of the foreman to gather the grapes from the several vines. The berries must be carefully selected and all bad grapes discarded. As they gather, the girls sing their national folk-songs in a high soprano; this pleases the proprietor of the vineyard for practical as well as æsthetic reasons, because while they are singing they cannot eat the grapes.

As the old saying runs in the French vineyards: "*Bouche qui mord à la chanson ne mord pas à la grappe*"—a mouth busy with song is not busy with the bunch; meaning that the singing of the *vendangeuses* profits the owner of the vineyard.

The young men, in squads of twenty or thirty, march with the laden baskets on their backs to the *lagar* or trough in which the grapes are trod, the leaders playing violin, accordion, triangle, castanets and drum, to keep all cheerful and make the work pass easily. Everything about the place is disinfected and beautifully clean. Into the huge *lagar* the grapes are tipped; when it is full—that is to say, about three feet deep with grapes, enough for 30 pipes or 20,000 bottles—a score of men and women treaders step in and begin the treading. Their naked legs have been scrupulously washed for the occasion and above

they wear special drawers. The musicians among them strike up the traditional tunes, while all paddle methodically round the trough, sinking lower and lower in the purple pool as the bunches crush beneath them. The work goes on till midnight.

Many machines have been invented for pressing grapes, but none seems so satisfactory as the foot of man, because it does not break the stones, which give a disagreeable taste to the wine. It is fatiguing work and the treaders stimulate their energies by taking occasional nips of native brandy. The vintagers are provided with three good meals a day, consisting of soup, sardines, rice, cod-fish, etc., together with rations of wine. The great dish of the Portuguese up-country is a sucking-pig or kid roasted on the ground with hot bricks and a wood fire—this for harvest-home.

As soon as the glass shows 60 to 70 per cent. of fermentation, the beautiful ruby juice is racked into huge vats, and brandy, made from the grapes, is put in to check the fermentation. About 1,800 pounds of grapes are required to make a pipe of Port (about 130 gallons). The finest grapes grown in the Alto Douro are the Tinta Francisca, Tinta Cão, Tourigo, Moreto, Mourisco Bastardo, Souzão, Tinta Amarella, and these are blended in the trough for making the best quality of Port.

Vintage Port usually remains in the pipe for about two years before it is bottled. Its fermentation is still incomplete; in course of time it precipitates argol, which forms a crust on the sides of the bottle. Crusted Port, therefore, is Port which has

completed its fermentation. Besides argol, the crust contains tartrate of lime and colouring matter; the elimination of these substances makes the wine lighter in colour and more ethereal in quality. Beeswing in fine Vintage Ports is very rare, and no one seems quite to know the cause of this floating deposit in the bottle.

In these days, however, a great deal of fine Port is not put into bottle so early in its career, but is allowed to mature in cask. Such wines, when properly selected and kept, maintain their vintage character, colour and flavour for a very long time in wood, and are much in request by connoisseurs of Port wine who, for various reasons, may no longer be able to take the heavier bottled wines. They also enjoy the approval of physicians. A writer in *The Lancet*, for instance, expresses his faith thus :

“I believe that a man who drinks a glass of Port drinks as nearly natural and as concentrated a form of fermented grape juice as it is humanly possible to set before him. There are no secrets, and there is no reserve about the processes of Port vinification. The supposed connection of Port wine with gout is a fable, having no better foundation than the generally ‘gout-producing habits’ of the last generation. Sound Port, of good original quality and well kept, is the most perfectly wholesome of all forms of wine. In Oporto gout is unknown.”

The old saying that “All wine would be Port if it could” reflects the high estimation in which Port has always been held. A wine so delicious

and invigorating will never lack devotees so long as the English climate endures. The most famous vintages still extant are those of 1878, '87, '90, '92, '96, 1900, '04, '08, '12, '17, '20, '22, '23 and '24. The '23 vintage is universally recommended for laying down, being considered one of the best since 1878; it is full of body and colour and will prove to be very valuable. Owing to the scarcity of fine wine, many shippers did not ship vintages for several years from 1917 onwards, using their wines for blending purposes only.

Historic Port years of last century were :

- 1815. " Waterloo."
- 1820. " Twenty " Port.
- 1834. " Thirty-four " Port.
- 1847. " Forty-seven " Port.
- 1851. " Exhibition."
- 1854. " Comet."
- 1863. " Sixty-three."
- 1868. " Sixty-eight."
- 1887. " Jubilee."
- 1896. " Ninety-six."

The Portuguese grow many good wines in their beautiful country, which they use for their own consumption. A good and pleasant wine, universally drunk at table, is Colares, which corresponds to Claret in France, and is grown, like Claret and Sherry too, for that matter, and even Port itself, to say nothing of Madeira and Canary, within range of the Atlantic breezes. The vineyards of Colares are in the historic strip of country west of Lisbon and the Tagus estuary, where every foot of ground

was fought over by Wellington and his veterans in the Peninsula War. The dark Lisbon wine is *pour le soif*, as the French significantly phrase it. Bucellas is a favourite wine of Hock character.

And there is always the *vino verde*, with a rasp to it, which the countryman loves, and of which you may see a porous earthen jar cooling in the sun not far from every sentry-box.

.

CHAPTER V

WINES OF SPAIN : SHERRY

SHERRY is grown in Andalusia, that romantic southernmost province of Spain, in the region round about Jerez de la Frontera.

It is an easy journey. The most comfortable way is to sail by one of the P. & O. steamers to Gibraltar; a ferry takes one across the bay to Algeciras in half an hour, and thence one can motor or go by train to Jerez. The best time is towards Easter, when elaborate religious ceremonies are performed in Seville during Holy Week, or else during Seville Fair, when the great bull fights take place.

Down there the spring of the year is about a month in advance of England; wild flowers of all colours "enamel the fields," as the Elizabethan poets used to say, while nightingales sing all day and night at Algeciras and Granada. At Jerez the big Sherry firms are pleased to show visitors round the *bodegas* or stores, and to submit to their judgment the different ages of the wines of Spain.

In vintage time, if the weather is that for which wine-growers pray, the torrid Andalusian slopes are somewhat trying to the northerner. There is no haste in the making of Sherry, and well it is that this should be, for it is one of the reasons why Sherry keeps so magnificently. The grapes are only taken when they are absolutely ripe, and the

picking is done with deliberate care. As the baskets are filled, they are loaded into wooden frames laid pannier-wise on horse-, mule- or donkey-back, and carried down to the press-house.

But here the grapes are not tipped straight into the trough; they are laid out first on straw mats in the yard and left to dry and heat in the sun for several hours. Then the mats are carried into the press-house one by one and emptied into shallow wooden *lagars*, where the grapes are spread evenly over the floor and trodden out in the ancient manner by the foot of man.

When the treading is done, the *mosto* or must is drawn straight off into butts and carted away to the *bodegas* or storehouses, there to ferment at leisure. About three months after vintage, when winter is at hand and the pulse of nature slackens, the wine is opened up and tasted butt by butt, classified according to character and dosed appropriately with Sherry brandy.

The curious thing is that of a hundred butts of wine made from the same vineyard at the same time, not one may be precisely like another; the vagaries of fermentation may produce a perfect and highly valuable Amontillado side by side with a butt of trifling worth. This infinite variety of Sherry, as it is found in the butt, affords great scope for the blender, whose skill it is to combine the individual qualities of his several wines into a single wine of all the virtues, and one, moreover, which experience has taught him his customers desire.

The delicious wines of the types called Amon-

tillado, Oloroso and Amoroso are mostly shipped to England. As the taste of the natural wine is sometimes too dry, *vino dulce* is made from the sweeter kind of grape called Pedro Jimenez and added in the blending. These grapes are allowed to hang on the vines exposed to the sun until they become almost raisins.

Manzanilla and Montilla are light, natural wines which are recommended for gout, being entirely free from saccharine. The real Manzanilla has a slightly bitter taste, like a tonic, and it is about this wine that the old tale is told of the late Earl of Derby, who was a great sufferer from gout. His physician recommended him to get some Manzanilla from his wine merchant. The Earl did so and, having tasted it, returned it with his compliments, saying that of the two he preferred the gout!

It is these light, dry, natural wines of the Manzanilla and Montilla types which are consumed by the Spaniards in the cafés, and it is only in Andalusia that they can be enjoyed to the dancing of the bolero, sevillanas, fandango, saraband and tango. Here in native perfection one sees that graceful play of the arms and hands, the sideward turn, the extreme backward extension of the head and body, which are so peculiarly Spanish, while the dark eyes and beautiful complexions of the dancers, their erect and dignified carriage, their fans and their mantillas, allure the traveller irresistibly. To realise the beauty of the shawl as an embellishment of woman one must see it worn by a Spanish lady.

In vintage time, when the long day's work is done and the *capataz* or head foreman comes in to

drink with his vintagers, one may sit in the village *posada* and hear the *gitanos* playing for the dance, while castanets clack and the vintagers beat time to the music, clapping hands and shouting, "Ole! Ole!" When the dancers sit down to rest, the *gitano* will lift up his voice and sing to his guitar the popular Malagueña and Sevillana airs; then the chorus rises loud and long.

In England Sherry has been known and highly esteemed for centuries past. Sack of Sherries (i.e. Xeres) was drunk in Henry the Eighth's time. "Sack, says my bush, Be merry and drink sherry,"¹ writes rare Ben Jonson, the Elizabethan. Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Falstaff a masterly and highly humorous encomium of its virtues:

A good sherris-sack hath a two-fold operation in it. It ascends me into the brain; dries me there all the foolish and dull and crudy vapours which environ it; makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery and delectable shapes; which, delivered o'er to the voice, the tongue, which is the birth, becomes excellent wit. The second property of your excellent sherris is, the warming of the blood; which, before cold and settled, left the liver white and pale, which is the badge of pusillanimity and cowardice; but the sherris warms it and makes it course from the inwards to the parts extreme: it illumineth the face, which as a beacon gives warning to all the rest of this little kingdom, man, to arm; and then the vital commoners and inland petty spirits muster me all to their captain, the heart, who, great and puffed up with this retinue, doth any deed of courage; and this valour comes of sherris.²

Only a Sherry drinker could have written that. Shakespeare loved the wine and knew its worth. That Sherry was not drunk in England at the

¹ *The New Inn*, i. 1.

² *2 Henry IV*, iv. 3.

time of which he was writing worried him not a jot, we may be sure, even if he knew it—still less his Elizabethan audience, who were doubtless grateful, as we may be too, for the glorious anachronism. In the days of Charles I its reputation was still supreme: “Your best sacks are of Seres in Spaine,” says Markham.¹

In modern and more prosaic language it has been said of Sherry that: “In its adaptability it yields to none; you may drink it on an empty stomach or a full stomach; before, during and after a meal; with fish, flesh, fowl or fruit, even with tobacco smoke or after Champagne—and you may be perfectly certain that it will never disagree.”

Sherry should indeed be the poor man's beverage, because, bottled or unbottled, it never loses its excellence. It may be kept for months in an open decanter with little deterioration, and in this respect it is unique among wines. Brown Sherries are coloured with wine made from grapes which have been dried in the sun like raisins. They are widely appreciated.

Many good wines are made in other parts of Spain, though their renown is not like that of Sherry. Alicante is grown in the south-east, in the province of that name on the Mediterranean sea-board. From the Catalan country, on the same sea-board but much to the north, come the abundant Tarragona wines. A generation ago there used to be a wine sold in England under the name of Catalan, but one does not hear much of it nowadays.

The good Rioja wines, somewhat like a stout

¹ *The English Hus-wife* (1631).

Claret, are grown about the headwaters of the Ebro, south of Bilbao and the Biscay shore, in the far north of Spain. Valdepeñas is the favourite wine of La Mancha, the country of the immortal Don Quixote, which is almost in the middle of Spain due south of Madrid. Malaga, a south-coast wine, and Rota Tent, are mostly used for Sacramental purposes.

CHAPTER VI

WINES OF FRANCE : CHAMPAGNE

THE best part of the Champagne vine-country lies some 80 to 100 miles east of Paris, in the districts of Reims, Epernay and Châlons. The slopes on which the vines grow are bounded on the north by the Reims mountain and on the south by the Brie country. The River Marne, famous for ever by reason of the victories of the Allies in the Great War, forms the central valley.

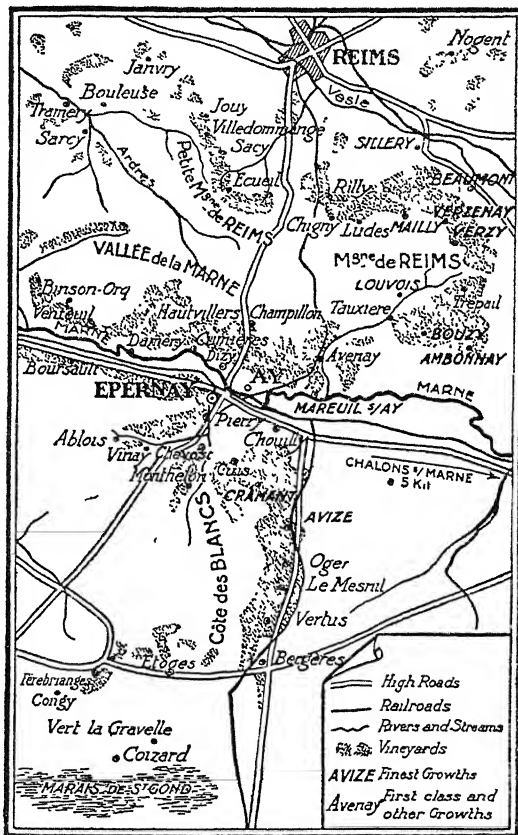
This Champagne country is easy to reach, either by aeroplane service from London to Paris ($2\frac{1}{2}$ hours) and thence by train (2 hours), or else direct via Calais to Reims ($10\frac{1}{2}$ hours). Several railway lines run between Paris and Reims, Paris-Epernay-Châlons, and Epernay-Ay-Reims, making it possible to travel from Paris and back the same day.

The principal centres are Reims, Epernay and Ay, but Châlons-sur-Marne and other places, such as Mareuil, Avize and Vertus, are also the homes of well-known firms. Indeed, the whole region of the vineyards is well worth a visit, and the roads are excellent for motoring. A great number of visitors come every year to see the wonderful subterranean cellars cut out of the chalk.

Magnificent forests crown the slopes, and the undulating vineyards with this woodland background are both picturesque in themselves and afford spreading views over the country round.

The peculiar chalky character of the soil is one of the chief causes of the remarkable quality of the wine.

On the slopes of the Mountain of Reims lie the



THE CHAMPAGNE DISTRICT.

leading first growths of Verzenay, Verzy and Mailly ; to the west are many secondary growths of great value. Between the Mountain and the Marne valley are Bouzy and Ambonnay, also leading first growths.

Ay, with the neighbouring villages of Mareuil, Dizy, Hautvillers and Cumières, is the centre of the Marne valley district.

To the south of the river lies the Côte des Blancs, where white grapes are grown. Cramant and Avize are perhaps the best parts of this region, with Oger and Le Mesnil. Farther south are the slopes of Vertus, where black grapes reappear.

Though its beautiful pale golden tint might suggest the contrary, Champagne is made mostly from black grapes. On the Mountain and in the valley of the Marne, as well as at Vertus, the vine is the Black Pinot, together with the Pinot Meunier, which is also a black grape. On the Côte des Blancs only the White Pinot Chardonnay is grown. The excellent quality of the wine is largely due to the Pinot, to which the soil is suitable.

Champagne, as presented by the great firms, is invariably a blend, in which each of the three great districts is represented, and their distinctive characteristics are harmonised and combined in such a way as to bring out the excellence of each.

The trade in Champagne wines is extremely ancient. The vines imported into Champagne by the Romans, about the third century, to replace those destroyed by the edict of Domitian two hundred years before, were cultivated and improved by the religious orders, who recognised that wine was a source of progress, activity and health. It was under the protection of the monasteries that most of the vineyards rose to prosperity. Saint Rémy, the celebrated archbishop of Reims,

mentioned the Champagne vines in his will, A.D. 530. Pope Urbain II, a native of Champagne, who died in A.D. 1099, was particularly fond of his own Ay wine.

By about the fourteenth century vineyards covered the district, and from that time onwards the wine was proudly offered to the kings of France when they came to Reims to be crowned. Champagne was then looked upon as the greatest treasure in the cellars of kings and nobles. Good Henri IV (1553-1610) delighted in using the title "Lord of Ay."

It was at the court of Louis XIV (1638-1715), who instituted the "Order of the Hill-sides," that the reputation of Champagne reached the pinnacle of fame from which it has never receded. "Spare no expense," wrote Saint-Evremond to the Comte d'Olonne, "to get some Champagne. No district supplies better wine for all seasons."

At the end of the seventeenth century a Benedictine monk, Dom Pérignon, cellarer to the Abbey of Hautvillers, near Epernay, discovered a method of bottling the wine at the right season, so that it should retain its sparkling qualities, together with perfect limpidity and pale colour. The renown of Champagne spread far and wide in consequence, and the memory of Dom Pérignon, who rests at Hautvillers, is still held in honour.

The culture of the vine in Champagne requires much care and is very costly, because the one aim is to produce the very best of fruit. The work is carried on by families of peasant proprietors, to whom the vineyard is an object of pride and love,

passing from father to son sometimes for centuries together.

When the vine is planted, six years must pass before it begins to yield grapes of the requisite quality; after this it lives for many years, though at the cost of constant labour.

The work starts in February with the pruning of the old wood; this is generally done by women. The branches that bore the previous year's grapes are all cut off except one and that is shortened; then the plant is buried, the shortened branch alone protruding from the soil. Wooden props are put in to support the new shoots, which are tied to them with straw and finally cut down to a height of about three feet. Growth is assisted by light hoeing.

These various operations are complicated by constant warfare against insidious enemies. The two pests known as oidium and mildew are kept in check by powdering and spraying. To combat the phylloxera, the terrible insect which years ago wrought such dire havoc in the vineyards, the Pinot is grafted on to specially selected plants which are immune from the pest. The vine-growers' syndicates maintain establishments where the resources of science are continually at the service of the cultivator.

After many days of hard work and anxiety the grower welcomes the approach of the vintage. Beneath the big green leaves are hidden the pretty bunches of Champagne grapes. On the vines which produce black grapes the colour has gradually changed from pale green to pink and finally to dark purple; on the white vines the shade is a delicate

transparent gold. It is about the end of September and the time of gathering is at hand.

The mayor of the town appoints the day when picking is to begin, and each day of the vintage is announced by ringing the church bells. The grape-pickers, men, women and children, arrive in families from far and near and spread themselves over the district. Since it is essential that the grapes should be taken at the moment of perfect ripeness, the work must be done quickly and completed within a few days. Nevertheless, care is taken to cut off all defective berries from each bunch before it is placed in the picker's basket; otherwise the wine would be spoiled. As the baskets are filled they are ranged along the borders of the vineyard, to be lifted presently into light carts with easy springs and carried off to the press-house; unless the grapes arrive perfectly fresh and unbruised the colour of the wine will suffer.

Gentle, continuous pressure separates the juice from the pulp and skins; it is the skins which contain the colouring matter and by eliminating them black grapes are made to produce golden wine. The juice from the first pressing is alone suitable for Champagne; this juice or must is put at once into barrels and carried off as fast as possible by motor-lorry or otherwise to the establishments of the buyers. Speed is vital at this stage; the presses work day and night, and thousands of barrels are used.

Fermentation begins at once in the barrels. The must swells and hisses; it appears to boil. But little by little everything calms down; the

miracle of fermentation is accomplished, and what was only sweet grape-juice is now magnificent wine.

Exhausted and paralysed by the cold of winter, the ferments become quiescent; the wine is clear and limpid. This is the time to taste and blend the *cuvées* in enormous vats. In the spring, obedient to nature's masterful call to every living thing, the wine wakes up from sleep; it is now drawn off into bottles, lightly dosed with pure candy sugar, and sent down to the cellars. The ferments set vigorously to work on the sugar, transforming it into alcohol and gas, and throwing out the useless parts as sediment.

This second fermentation, as it is called, takes about three months, during which the bottle is kept cork downwards and constantly turned on its axis, so that by the time the fermentation is complete the whole of the deposit has gathered in the neck. To get rid of it, the cellarman loosens the cork until the gas blows out cork and sediment together; at that precise moment he deftly turns the bottle upwards, fills it up with wine, adds the *liqueur*, and recorks it with a new cork cut from the best Spanish bark. The *liqueur* is made of candy sugar dissolved in wine, and the quantity is regulated by the taste of the country for which the wine is destined. Some like it sweet, others dry.

The bottles are stacked in the vast cellars for several years until the wine is mature. Before shipment, they are elegantly "dressed" with the traditional capsule and label whose very aspect is an invitation to good-feeling, jollity and mirth.

The district which is entitled under French law

to use the name Champagne is comparatively small. Moreover, the nature of the soil, the species of vines and the mode of cultivation conduce to quality at the expense of quantity ; for here, as elsewhere, the one is scarcely compatible with the other. The crop varies considerably from year to year, but the average for the thirty years to 1915 was about ten million gallons a year. During the same period the average shipment was thirty million bottles or about five and a half million gallons a year—scarcely more than half the crop, the reason being that only the better portions of the vintage are made use of for wine intended to be presented as Champagne.

As the wine is only shipped from the matured reserves, the stocks held in bottle by the merchants are necessarily immense ; in addition, there are the reserves in wood of the best vintages, for use in the composition of the *cuvées*. The total stocks represent about five years' shipments and require enormous cellarage, much of which is found in the old chalk quarries of the region.

All through the War the Champagne country was the scene of a tragic but glorious struggle. In front of the Reims mountain the German front was immobilised from 1914 to 1918, and along its slopes the last German offensive was broken in July 1918. The vineyards suffered severely. Trenches furrowed the vines, shells uprooted them ; the peasants saw their houses and their goods destroyed by fire, and many lives were lost.

But despite of shell and bomb the vine-dressers clung to their work as well as they could, until they were ordered to leave in the spring of 1918. In

October, so soon as ever the enemy were gone, they came back, camped out in their ruined villages, and started to put the vineyards in order, tending such vines as had been spared. So it was that, as early as 1920, an excellent vintage was gathered amounting to nearly 7,000,000 gallons.

The merchants, too, suffered severely. From 1914 to 1918 the Germans were at the very gate of Reims, bombarding the city day by day, often with gas and incendiary shells. All of the houses in Reims were more or less destroyed, and many in Epernay suffered the same fate, though not one shell broke through into the deep, well-built cellars, and the stocks of wine were undamaged.

And the Champagne merchants showed the same pertinacity as the peasants; they never ceased working, except from April to November 1918, when all civilians were sent away. Immediately after the Armistice they and their men returned, using temporary buildings hastily thrown together over the cellars, and by 1920 business was again in full swing.¹

The good name of Champagne is justly safeguarded by rigid laws. Not only is the area of its growth strictly defined, but a tally is taken of every vintage, and the produce is jealously watched until it reaches the consumer in France or is shipped abroad. This wine and no other may—and must—bear the name “Champagne” on label, cork and case. This is the guarantee to the consumer. As

¹ The author's diary of visits to Reims during the Great War, describing life in the city, is published in *Fifty Years of Travel by Land, Water and Air*.

sparkling wine cannot be exported in bulk, but only in bottle, it follows that if your bottle comes from France and carries the magic word on the label and on the cork, inside the neck, it contains the genuine product.

Champagne should be treated with the respect due to a superb but delicate wine. It is better not to ship it during the heat of summer nor during periods of hard frost. Cellar temperature should be about 50 to 55 degrees Fahrenheit; the bottles must always lie horizontally or the cork will dry up little by little and flatness and other troubles may ensue. Nor should Champagne ever be decanted into a jug or other receptacle; it must be served straight from the bottle into the glass or a serious loss of its best qualities will result.

The connoisseur is recognised by the way he serves his wines. His Champagne will be cooled some time beforehand by placing the bottle in an ice pail; but ice will never be put into the glass. A slight mist on the outside of the glass is an indication that the temperature is right. The glasses should be thin and of elegant shape—as thin (if they could be made so) as a soap bubble or the old Cretan “egg-shell” vessels. Such would also make an ideal receptacle for other fine French wines of the first growths.

The last big Champagne vintages were 1911, '14, '15, '17, '19, '20, '21 and '23.

NOTE.—A good account of the Champagne vine-country and Champagne wine has been written by M. Georges Chappez, manager of the Champagne Wine Growers' Association, and

M. Alexandre Henriot, Delegate Secretary of the Champagne Wine Merchants' Syndicate, to whom I am indebted for much of my information. By a curious coincidence I came across their work in a somewhat out-of-the-way place, namely, the Hôtel Transatlantique in Marakeesh, the old capital of the Moors, under the shadow of the great Atlas range of mountains, when I was travelling in Morocco by aeroplane and automobile in the spring of 1925, after re-visiting the wine countries of Tunis and Algeria.

CHAPTER VII

WINES OF FRANCE : BURGUNDY

THE vine is supposed to have travelled into France from Persia and the East. The wines of the South of France are noticed by Roman writers. Cicero in one of his orations alludes to a charge of extortion made in connection with a species of tax or octroi levied on all wines entering Toulouse.

There was Prohibition even in those ancient days. The Emperor Domitian, notoriously a cruel and gloomy man, issued an edict from Rome (A.D. 92), that the vines of Spain and France were to be grubbed up. But in A.D. 282 the good Emperor Probus took off the ban and permitted vines to be replanted in the prohibited countries, where for nearly two centuries their cultivation had been rigorously suppressed.

This permission to possess once more the smiling vineyard and to quaff the generous juice of the grape was hailed by millions with unbounded delight. Six generations of men had passed away, to whom the cultivation of the grape was but an hereditary tale, the cheerfulness of the vine-dresser and the joys of the vintage a fond tradition. Their descendants now came forward to take part in replanting the "forbidden tree" which they had never seen.

That must have been a singular and heart-cheering spectacle, when the people of France, by nature

so prone to enjoyment, assembled with shouts of exultation for the purpose of repairing to the place of the traditionary vineyard, which for so many years the plough had furrowed for the production of inferior corn. The entire population of numberless towns and villages poured forth upon the country-side, and having set the vine in the presumed site of its former culture gave rein to song and dance. The wound so tyrannically inflicted on the national agriculture was healed.

Soon on the banks of the Marne and Loire, of the Saône and Rhône, and onward to the shores of the romantic Rhine, the fragrant wine-blossoms once more rejoiced the hearts of the gay inhabitants of France. Now for many centuries past wine has been made and enjoyed there without interruption. Long may it be so !

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries returning Crusaders brought with them from Corinth, Cyprus and elsewhere rich Muscat vines, till then unknown in France. The plants were first set at the foot of the Pyrenees, and thence came the rich Frontignac, Lunel and Rivesaltes, sweet and luscious wines. The introduction of different varieties of vines was subsequently carried out to an incredible extent.

Every wine has its own enthusiasts, every growth has inspired its own poet. An old French saw assigns their relative positions thus : “ Burgundy for kings, Champagne for duchesses, Claret for gentlemen, and Port for citizens.” The very name of the district which produces the finest Burgundy wines, *Côte d’Or*—the golden hillside—suggests

the highest excellence. The great names of *Romanée*, *Vougeot*, *Saint-Georges*, *Chambertin*, *Corton*, *Montrachet* are household words.

Burgundy was the favourite wine of Louis XIV, and every year the City of Paris made him a present of bottles of Romanée from the cellars of the monks of Saint-Vivant. The Archbishop of Paris in 1782 sang the praises of his favourite wine: "O Montrachet! dear Montrachet! divine Montrachet! First and finest of white wines, I salute thee with admiration!" Alexandre Dumas, tasting this nectar, said: "This wine ought to be drunk on bended knees, with head uncovered!" It is an old saying that "A bottle of Chambertin, a *ragoût Sardanapalus* and a lady to talk to are the three best table companions in France."

The chain of hills called the Côte d'Or lies between Dijon in the north and Chagny in the south. It is about forty miles long and embraces about 10,000 acres of vineyards. Over a great part of this area both soil and temperature are exceptionally favourable to the cultivation of the grape. The famous wines of the Côte d'Or differ widely in strength, fineness and bouquet, according to the locality in which they are grown, yet the grape which produces them is one and the same. It is a curiosity of Burgundy that it matures even better in England than in its own country.

Dijon and Beaune are the best centres from which to visit the Côte d'Or, and both towns are full of interest. The train from Paris to Dijon takes 4½ hours. Or one can motor along the shady avenues of the *Grande Route Nationale*, which passes through

the beautiful forest of Fontainebleau, Sens and Laroche.

The first village out of Dijon on the southward way to Beaune is Chenôve, where the Clos du Roi is situated and many good wines are made. Then comes Gevrey-Chambertin, of illustrious reputation. Chambertin is a perfect wine, possessing great body, colour, bouquet and delicacy. It is one of the three big wines of Burgundy. Chambertin, Romanée, Clos de Vougeot—these three take the palm among fine Burgundies.

Vougeot is the next village, with the vineyards of Chambolle-Musigny on the right, the celebrated Clos de Vougeot on the left and Vosne-Romanée hard by. The Chambolle-Musigny wines are much appreciated by gourmets, and the Musigny compares well with other great wines.

At the beginning of the twelfth century the valuable Clos de Vougeot, like most of the other first growths, belonged to the monks, who worked the vines for the monasteries. It has changed proprietors many times, and now contains 126 acres belonging to forty different owners. The Clos de Vougeot in a good vintage fetches the highest price of all the Burgundies.

The Romanée-Conti is a vineyard celebrated for the exquisite quality of its wine; it catches the sun all day long, and the fruit is very ripe when gathered. The Romanée has but two acres, and the Richebourg about twelve acres; both these wines are first growths and fetch very high prices.

Still travelling southwards, we reach Nuits-St.-Georges, where the vineyards are divided among

several owners and the *cuvées* are of the first class. During the War, in September 1916, I called on M. Grivelet Cusset, the well-known wine-broker of Nuits, who accompanied me to see the prisoners of the Prussian Guard weeding with spade and trowel among the vines. About twenty prisoners worked in a batch, with one French *poilu*, armed with rifle and long bayonet, to guard them. The Prussians kept their discipline in captivity, and when the French corporal came along they jumped to attention and saluted with alacrity. The men were strong and well set up, and accustomed to field work.

Aloxe-Corton, the next village, whose wine also ranks among the first growths, lies below the hill; the extensive vineyards and forests above are the prettiest along the Côte.

Now the road brings us to Savigny-les-Beaune and the famous Château of Savigny, built in 1672. Its surroundings are very beautiful. Over the entrance to the cellars is written the spirited inscription: "*Les vins de Savigny sont nourrissants, théologiques et morbifuges*"—the wines of Savigny are nutritious and ecclesiastical, and they dispel melancholy.

It was at Savigny during the vintage of 1703 that the Duke of Burgundy, journeying to Dijon, dined at the château and was moved to enthusiasm by the excellent wine of Savigny. "'Tis the wine of a demi-god!" he cried. The wines are rich in bouquet and much appreciated for their remarkable strength, combined with exquisite and delicate *finesse*. Some of the first *cuvées* in this district

belong to the Hospices de Beaune—and here we are at that historic town, where Julius Cæsar sojourned and where he planted vineyards.

Many times have I stayed in Beaune from my earliest days. It is one of those real French towns to which it is always a pleasure to return, to renew one's acquaintance and to see old friends again, not forgetting the grand wines of Burgundy and the renowned cuisine of the *chefs de Bourgogne*. Especially alluring is the Hospices de Beaune, a most interesting place, full of historic memories, and also a most deserving charitable institution.

Les Hospices de Beaune was built in the fifteenth century, and seldom can any monument have been preserved so perfectly for so many generations. It owns a number of vineyards, which are among the best of the Côte de Beaune. The wine is sold by auction every year on a Sunday during the first fortnight in November. As the sale is in aid of charity, high prices are paid and enormous sums are gathered in for the Hospices.

For nearly five hundred years the establishment has been admirably kept by pious nuns belonging to rich families, who work as hospital nurses. They wear white flowing robes and a white head-dress in summer, blue linen in winter. A bib-apron, symbol of humble service to the poor, completes the costume. In recompense for their charitable offices they receive, under the foundation, three hundred francs a year as wages.

Among the many paintings in the Hospices is a wonderful picture of the "Last Judgment," which was presented by the founder and is valued at many

thousands of pounds. The excruciating torments of men and women in the fiery gulfs of Hell are portrayed with that relish and wealth of detail which were so characteristic of the mediæval mind. Here, too, is Heaven, the paradise and abode of the blessed, and the joyful rising of the saints from their graves on Resurrection Day. Naïve contrasts are insisted upon with the most expressive and, if I may say so, "full-bodied" realism.

From Beaune one can visit the villages of Pommard and Volnay, whose vineyards, with those of Beaune, are among the oldest in the Côte d'Or. The wines of Pommard are mentioned in records of the eleventh century, and from time immemorial they have been known for their delicacy and *finesse*. The first *cuvées* are sold all over Europe as grand wines; in a good vintage year they are perfect. The second *cuvées* are classed as superior wines, and the third as delicious ordinary wines.

The region of Volnay is admirably situated for wine-growing, being high enough to escape the valley mists, yet not so high as to lose the protection of the summit. Consequently, it produces a great number of excellent wines. In the Middle Ages the Dukes of Burgundy treasured the fine wines of Volnay with as much solicitude as their own crown jewels. There is an old pentameter which runs : "*Et sine Volnæo gaudia nulla mero*"—without Volnay no joys for me!

On higher ground on the same mountain-side is Monthélie. Its fine wines, though less delicate than those of Volnay, have nice bouquet, plenty of body and a good colour; they also keep admir-

ably. Hard by is Meursault, whose first wines are white. They have perfect brightness and exquisite perfume, and keep for many years without trouble. The red wines are esteemed as very good ordinary wines.

Puligny-Montrachet and Chassagne-Montrachet produce the exquisitely delicate Montrachet, which stands supreme among the white wines of the Côte d'Or, like Château Yquem in the Bordelais, and very high among the white wines of the world. The general name used on wine lists for the white Burgundies is "Chablis." They are drier than the white Sauternes of Bordeaux and are favoured for drinking with oysters.

At Santenay our journey ends. This is the southern extremity of the Côte d'Or, so far as the fine wines are concerned. The wines of Santenay display all the characteristics of the *grands crus*; they are soft and develop a fine bouquet with age.

THE LANGUAGE OF WINE

The vineyard and the press-house, like other ancient crafts of man, have a vocabulary of their own, which is neither used nor understood outside their own domain. There is also, however, a language of wine which is of interest not only to the wine-maker, but to the wine-drinker too. I have translated as well as I can about fifty expressions which are most commonly used in France to describe the various qualities and defects of wine and the changes to which it is subject, drawing

the original definitions chiefly from Camille Rodier, who follows Jullien. Regard them, if you will, as a glossarial essay in the natural history of wine.

acerbe (*bitter*): Wines made with grapes from bad vines or with immature grapes ; they are hard, harsh and sour.

âpre (*harsh*): Wines which are so rough as to cause a disagreeable taste on the palate.

arome (*aroma*): The odour which wines give forth, generally called bouquet.

arome spiritueux (*spirituous aroma*): The scent which rises from the wine at the time of tasting ; it lasts much longer than the taste. See *sève*.

bouquet: Agreeable odour which good wines give out at the moment of exposure to the air. See *sève*.

vin bourru (*surly wine*): Wine which comes out of the *cuvée* or press with its transparency obscured by a large quantity of lees.

charnu (*body*): Applied to a wine which has substance, but not much spirit—a deficiency which distinguishes it from *vin corsé*. See *mâche*.

corps, vin qui a du corps, vin corsé (*body, wine with body, full-bodied wine*): Expressions used to describe wines which possess substance, pronounced taste and vinous strength, and which “ fill the mouth ” ; the opposite of a light, dry, cold or watery wine.

cru, crudité (*raw, rawness*): Applied to wines which are too young, not yet ripe, and still retain a disagreeable greenness. See *vert*.

cru (*growth*): The ground where the wine grows. Denotes sometimes the produce of a particular vine or vineyard, and sometimes the produce of a stretch of ground containing many growths of varying quality.

cuvée (*tubful*): This word, in its most general sense, means the quantity of wine contained in a wine tub ; but it is also used for the whole produce of a vineyard, which fills several *cuvées*. A wine of the first pressing (*première cuvée, premier cru*) means wine which is the first or best quality for the

country, the second press (*deuxième cuvée* or *cru*) means wine which is inferior to the former. *Cuvée* is sometimes synonymous with *cru*. Yet again, a number of casks of the same kind of wine or of identical blend are also called a *cuvée*. To put "*en cuvée*" is to blend wines in such a way that each cask contains an equal proportion of each of the wines.

délicat, délicatesse (*delicate, delicacy*): A delicate wine has little tartar and colouring matter; it is neither rough nor sharp; it may have alcoholic strength, some body and even *grain*; but all these qualities must be well blended, so that none dominates the rest. Also called *élégant*.

dur, dureté (*hard, hardness*): Hard wines are those which affect the palate disagreeably.

élégant: See **délicat**.

évent, goût d' (*flat*): Wines become so when left in cask or bottle and not sufficiently corked.

faible (*weak*): Applied to wines with little body, alcoholic strength or flavour. Some of these are very agreeable, and many people prefer them for daily use. Providing they have no other faults, they can always be improved by blending with good wines.

ferme, fermeté (*firm, firmness*): Used to describe a wine which combines much body with strength, vigour or *mordant*; or one which, not having reached its full maturity, still retains some greenness. This peculiar quality is a fault in wines intended solely for drinking, but a virtue in those which are required for rejuvenating other wines.

fin, finesse (*fine, fineness*): A wine has *finesse* when it is light and delicate—qualities which are found in table wines as well as in fine wines; but the latter should also have *sève* and above all *bouquet*.

finir, vins qui finissent bien (*wines which end well*): Wines which keep well, improve with age and are least liable to go bad. This quality is common to good wines, but rare in poor ones. Good keeping wines are called *vins de garde*.

fort (*strong*): Wines which, having good spirituous strength and body, and a pronounced flavour, are able to give tone to the stomach, to last well, and to re-establish enfeebled or degenerate wines.

franc de goût (*natural tasting*): Wines which have no other flavour than that of the grape. Wines which taste of the soil or herbage are not so reputed, although the taste be natural.

fumeux (*heady*): Wines whose spirituous elements volatilise quickly and go to the brain.

généreux (*generous*): A wine is generous when it warms and soothes, gives tone to the stomach, helps assimilation and strengthens the digestive powers. This is the peculiar quality of Burgundy.

grain (*grape*): A kind of roughness, by no means unpleasant, which is noticeable more or less in most soft or dry wines, when they are still somewhat young.

grossier (*coarse*): Hard, with a clammy taste, or heavy, thick and unpleasing. There are several good growths which sometimes appear like this when young, but as they get older they rid themselves of the lees which obscured their qualities, and become fine and agreeable.

léger (*light*): Wines of this type have little body, colour or grain. They are sometimes very alcoholic, and those which are not are weak and flat.

liqueur, liquoreux: Wine which is still sweet and soft is described as *liquoreux* or as having *de la liqueur*. This does not mean that it is definitely a *vin de liqueur*, because the latter should retain these qualities after the fermentation is complete.

mâche (*mash*): A thick and pasty wine, which fills the mouth and seems to possess substance enough to be chewed.

moelle (*marrow*): Wine which is "oily" without being *liquoreux*. It has body and substance, but no roughness.

moelleux (*mellow*): Wines which have some substance, and are soft, rather than hard and sharp. The word is applicable to wines which come between the dry wines and the *vins de liqueur*.

montant (*rising*): A wine is said to have *du montant* when its aromatic and alcoholic elements go imperceptibly to the head, inducing that pleasant feeling that all is well.

mordant (*biting*): Such wines have the power of imparting their flavour to wines with which they are mixed. Their alcoholic strength, good flavour and body improve a weak wine.

mou (*flabby*): Lacking in body and bite.

nerf, nerveux (*vigour, vigorous*): Wine of this type contains sufficient strength and spirit to preserve its quality for a long time. It bears sea and land journeys better than other wine, and is not affected by vagaries of weather; it is also very good for re-establishing enfeebled wines.

pâteux (*pasty*): Wine of thick substance, which fills the mouth and seems to stick to the palate.

plat (*dull*): Flat wines, devoid of body, flavour and spirit. Though often full of colour, they are apt to go bad, but they can be improved and their life lengthened by mixing them with others which are alcoholic and full bodied.

piquant (*acid*): Wines which have a disagreeable effect on the palates of people who are not in the habit of drinking them; also wines which turn sour.

poussé or échauffé, goût d': Fetid taste and odour found in recently made wines which have been allowed to ferment too strongly or too long; in old wine it is caused by an accidental fermentation not checked in time.

précoce (*precocious*): Wines which quickly attain maturity.

sève (*sap, vigour*): Indicates the vinous force and aromatic savour which develop during the tasting of the wine, perfuming the palate, and continuing after the wine has been drunk. It consists of alcoholic and aromatic elements which dilate and vaporise as soon as the wine is warmed in the mouth and stomach. Another name for the same thing is *arome spiritueux*. The *sève* differs from the *bouquet* in that the latter is given off in contact with the air, does not indicate alcoholic strength, and excites the sense of smell rather than that of taste.

soyeux (*silky*): Wines whose contact with the palate produces an agreeable sensation, free from any roughness.

tourner (*turn*): A wine is said to turn when it spoils or decomposes. It may turn sour, bitter, thick or putrid, and has *tourné à l'aigre* when it has gone quite bad.

velouté (*velvety*): Wine without a suspicion of greenness or roughness, dryness or pastiness; its softness is not the sugared sweetness of the *vins de liqueur*, and it imparts to the palate no other sensation than that of its perfume and pleasurable taste.

- vert** (*green*): Young wine which still contains much acidity ; one of the factors that make for a good keeping wine, as in the adage, "*Vin vert, riche Bourgogne*"—a green wine makes rich Burgundy.
- vif** (*lively*): Wines which are *moelleux*, not *piquant*, and are also light.
- vin doux** (*sweet wine*): Wine which has not completed its fermentation and still retains a sweet taste. Also applies to the must just pressed from the grape.
- vin sec** (*dry wine*): The opposite of *moelleux*.
- vineux** (*vinous*): Indicates much strength and alcoholic content, and, in a word, all the characteristics of a wine that *is* wine.
- vinosité** (*vinosity*): The flavour and strength of a wine ; may also indicate a very high alcoholic content.

NOTE.—A good book about Burgundy is *Le Vin de Bourgogne* (*La Côte d'Or*), by Camille Rodier (published by Louis Damot, Dijon).

CHAPTER VIII

WINES OF FRANCE: BORDEAUX

BORDEAUX is in the department of the Gironde, in the south-west region of France. The town passed by marriage to Henry II in 1152, two years before his accession as the first Plantagenet King of England, and remained an English possession for three hundred years. It was at one time the seat of the brilliant court of Edward the Black Prince, whose son, Richard II, was born there in 1367. The town was restored to France in 1452. Towards the close of the Napoleonic Wars, Wellington entered Bordeaux with the victorious British Army after his defeat of Soult at the Battle of Orthez in February 1814. To this day there is a powerful strain of British blood in the business population of Bordeaux.

For centuries past Bordeaux has been the centre of a great wine trade. The fame of the Gironde began about the time of the invasion of Gaul by the Romans; it is spoken of by the poet Ausonius, who was born at Bordeaux, so far back as the fourth century. The wonderful soil suits the vines to perfection, and it is to this lavish gift of nature that the wines of Bordeaux owe their extraordinary quality and world-wide reputation.

Unfortunately, like other fruits, the vine has many enemies—frost, hail, oidium, phylloxera, mildew, brown, white and black rot, insects en-

couraged by the wanton destruction of the birds, and many other maladies and afflictions. Of all such the Gironde has had its full share, but it has never failed to triumph over them in the end.

Médoc, where most of the fine Clarets are grown, is the triangular region between the Garonne and its estuary, the Gironde, on the one side and the Bay of Biscay on the other. On the southern side of Bordeaux, higher up the river, is the district of Graves, famous for its red and especially its white wines, while still farther to the south grow the Sauternes. The Saint-Emilion wines are grown in the valley of the Dordogne, which also flows into the Gironde estuary north of the Garonne.

There is no wine-growing area in the world where variations and combinations of soil and climatic aspect produce so many varieties of wine. Environment makes all the difference, as in life itself sometimes, and good and bad grow almost cheek by jowl. The vineyards are divided literally among thousands of individual proprietors, some of whose properties amount to no more than a row or two of treasured vines; the growths of wine, each with its own peculiar characteristics, are still more numerous.

Any day in the Bordeaux country the interested traveller, like the poet Omar, may hear great argument about the respective virtues of this growth and that. Some of these controversies, I have no doubt, are raging to-day with the same fervour as when I, a youth, did studiously frequent the masters and sages of the Gironde. The study of Claret is work for a lifetime, and in order that the inquirer

might not for evermore come out by the same door as in he went, the wine-brokers of Bordeaux, experts all, met together in solemn conclave about the middle of last century and settled the matter once for all by drawing up an official classification of the Bordeaux wines in grades of merit.

Of sixty best growths of Claret admitted to this scroll of honour, supremacy is accorded to four illustrious names—Château Lafite, Château Margaux, Château Latour and Château Haut-Brion. Lafite, Margaux and Latour are of the Médoc; Haut-Brion is a Graves; all are very valuable. Château Lafite belongs to the French de Rothschilds; a former owner, M. de Pichard, was guillotined in 1793, with many another whom France could ill afford to lose. In the fifteenth century Château Margaux was a fortified castle, called Lamothe; until 1920, when it passed into the hands of a company, it had been in the possession of two successive families for eighty years.

Château Latour in 1677 passed by a marriage settlement into the family of Ségur, whose descendants still have it. Château Haut-Brion is only three miles out of Bordeaux, on the way to Pessac. Road, train and tramway run through the estate; houses and factories encompass the vineyards, and I am afraid that in a very few years it may no longer exist, because the estate will be more valuable as building land. The Château Haut-Brion ought to be preserved as a national monument, in tribute to its splendid vineyard, which has been renowned the world over for centuries past.

The vintage in the Médoc starts about the second

week in September, and lasts till the end of the month or the beginning of October. Great care is used in picking the grapes and rejecting the unsound fruit. For the finest wines the stalks are usually removed before pressing. Though many grapes are now pressed by machinery, no machine seems to crush the grapes better than the human foot, which does not squeeze out too much acidity from the skin nor break the grape stones, which give a disagreeable taste to the wine ; also the must is better aerated and the ferments mix more thoroughly with the juice. The feet and legs are perfectly washed and quite as clean as the hands of a fastidious man. Fresh air blows freely through the press-house.

From the press the mass of juice, skins and pips is tipped into huge vats to ferment. This is for red wine ; for white wine the skins and pips are rejected and the juice alone is used. Nothing is added either to assist or to retard fermentation ; the process is allowed to proceed to its natural completion, and when it is over the wine is drawn into casks to mature. All that is necessary now is to re-cask it from time to time to get the lees away, then to clear it with white of egg or some such agent, and finally to bottle it off. It is because Claret is so simply and naturally made that it is one of the most wholesome of beverage wines.

Besides the red wines of the Médoc, the Gironde valley has every reason to be proud of its white wines, generally known by the names of Sauternes, Graves and Barsacs. The Sauternes vineyards on the hilly banks of the Garonne and the Ciron are

bathed in the sun's rays from morning till night, yet sheltered from the severe Atlantic gales by the fine forests of the Landes.

They yield but small crops and few fine vintages are recorded, because warm weather is essential throughout the whole of the summer. The vintage is later than in Médoc, commencing generally at the end of September and terminating in the first days of November. In a single vineyard it may sometimes last nearly two months, according to the nature of the grapes, the atmospheric conditions and the degree of care bestowed on the work.

The methods of vintage and wine-making in the Sauternes country are of quite a special nature. When the grapes are thoroughly ripe the leaves are picked off the vines and the grapes are allowed to wait until the extreme limit of maturity is reached. Under the mild rays of the autumn sun, they turn a golden hue, then redden; but they still await the advent of a certain mycoderm or skin-fungus, whose busy, silent work is necessary to their perfection.

In a warm and humid temperature the topaz colour will here and there change gradually to brown, the skin becomes thin and splits, permitting a sugary juice to escape. The pulp then also splits—"death of the grape," they call it—and a greyish excrescence presently appears. If circumstances are favourable, this will gradually extend to the whole of the bunch, which will then form a single grey, downy mass, from which the pollen flies at a touch. In this state the grapes are very valuable, but delicate. In fine weather they will improve

still further by desiccation ; if it rains, they are sure to be damaged by the moisture.

The vintage starts as soon as the first grapes, thus transformed, begin to wrinkle up. Gathering is done in very small portions at a time, sometimes grape by grape, and continues either speedily or slowly according to the condition of the vines and the temperature. Every effort is directed towards securing a maximum of quality, in entire indifference to quantity or economy.

From four to six gatherings or *tries* are generally necessary to collect the whole of the grapes. The operation is effected by means of a special kind of scissors, with which the gatherer is able to detach from the bunch only those grapes which have arrived at the desired condition. As a rule, gathering does not begin before 7 or 8 o'clock in the morning, and if there is the least bit of rain, or the grapes are moist, the vintage is suspended until they become dry. Needless to say, vintage in these conditions is both tedious and costly.

Consequently, these famous Sauternes wines are not usually regarded as an everyday beverage. They are essentially wines for the refined palate—"for the tables of the kings and the altars of the gods" (*regum mensis arisque deorum*, as Virgil puts it). Endowed with unrivalled softness and delicacy, the Sauternes will always stand supreme for refinement of flavour combined with great style and elegance.

Most famous of all is that great wine, the Château Yquem (first growth). The grapes contain much saccharine and must be ripened to excess by the

heat of the sun before they can be pressed. Consequently, it often happens that the gathering lasts for many weeks; for so long, in fact, as the juice of the grape is not thoroughly converted into that lovely golden nectar so rich in bouquet and so luscious to the taste. The berries are allowed almost to drop from the vine before they are picked; the skin may then be detached from the pulp with the lightest pressure.

Château Yquem is probably the most celebrated white wine in the world, and commands the highest price of all Sauternes. It is recorded that in 1859 the Grand Duke Constantine, brother of the Tsar of Russia, bought a *tonneau* of '47 Yquem for £800 when staying in Bordeaux. A *tonneau* is equal to 4 hogsheads or 92 dozen bottles, so the purchase would work out at about £8 14s. the dozen, without duty, freight or other charges—an extraordinary price for wine in bulk, either then or since.

Among the wines of Graves is the Château de Carbonnieux, which is distinguished by a particular flavour and an agreeable bouquet. These wines of Carbonnieux are said to have been sent formerly to Turkey, as to which this anecdote is quaintly told:

“The estate of Carbonnieux once belonged to the Abbey of St. Croix, of Bordeaux. The Holy Fathers found large profit in sending their wines to Turkey (for the Church does not despise this world's lucre), and the profit would have been larger still but for the unfortunate operation of the Mussulman law against intoxicating drink.

“To mystify Mahomet was a worthy and a holy

work for the children of St. Benet. Therefore, they exported their white wine (whose limpidity was remarkable) as 'The Mineral Waters of Carbonnieux,' and under this entry it passed in safety through the custom-house of the infidel and escaped the anathema of the descendant of the Prophet."

A sagacious Frenchman, hearing this tale, remarked that it was much better to give wine for water than to pass off water for wine, as too often happened in his own country!

WINES OF BORDEAUX IN ORDER OF MERIT

(Officially classified in the year 1855 by the *Chambre Syndicale des Courtiers* or Chamber of Wine Brokers.)

RED BORDEAUX: CLARETS

First Growths

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Château Lafite | Pauillac |
| Château Margaux | Margaux |
| Château Latour | Pauillac |
| Château Haut-Brion | Pessac (Graves) |

Second Growths

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Mouton | Pauillac |
| Rauzan-Ségla | Margaux |
| Rauzan-Gassies | " |
| Léoville-Lascases | Saint-Julien |
| Léoville-Poyferré | " |
| Léoville-Barton | " |
| Durfort-Vivens | Margaux |
| Lascombes | " |
| Gruaud-Larose-Sargent | Saint-Julien |
| Gruaud-Larose-Faure | " |
| Brane-Cantenac | Cantenac |

84 WINE AND WINE LANDS OF THE WORLD

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Pichon-Longueville | Paillaac |
| Pichon-Longueville-Lalande | " |
| Ducru-Beaucaillou | Saint-Julien |
| Cos-d'Estournel | Saint-Estèphe |
| Montrose | " |

Third Growths

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Kirwan | Cantenac |
| Issan | " |
| Lagrange | Saint-Julien |
| Langoa | " |
| Giscours | Labarde |
| Malescot-Saint-Exupéry | Margaux |
| Cantenac-Brown | Cantenac |
| Palmer | " |
| La Lagune | Ludon |
| Desmirail | Margaux |
| Caton-Ségur | Saint-Estèphe |
| Ferrière | Margaux |
| Marquis d'Alesme-Becker | " |

Fourth Growths

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Saint-Pierre-Sevaistre | Saint-Julien |
| Saint-Pierre-Bontemps | " |
| Branais-Ducru | " |
| Talbot | " |
| Duhart-Milon | Paulliac |
| Poujet | Cantenac |
| La Tour-Carnet | Saint-Laurent |
| Rochet | Saint-Estèphe |
| Beychevelle | Saint-Julien |
| Le Prieure | Cantenac |
| Marquis-de-Terme | Margaux |

Fifth Growths

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Pontet-Canet | Paulliac |
| Batailley | " |

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Grand-Puy-Lacoste . . . | Pauillac |
| Grand-Puy-Ducasse . . . | " |
| Lynch-Bages . . . | " |
| Lynch-Moussas . . . | " |
| Dauzac . . . | Labarde |
| Mouton-d'Armailhacq . . . | Pauillac |
| Le Tertre . . . | Arsac |
| Haut-Bages-Libéral . . . | Pauillac |
| Pedesciaux . . . | " |
| Belgrave . . . | Saint-Laurent |
| Camensac . . . | " |
| Cos-Labory . . . | Saint-Estèphe |
| Clerc-Milon . . . | Pauillac |
| Croizet-Bages . . . | " |
| Cantemerle . . . | Macau |

WHITE BORDEAUX : SAUTERNES

First Growths

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Château Yquem . . . | Sauternes |
| Château La Tour-Blanche . . . | Bommes |
| Château Peyraguey . . . | " |
| Château Vigneau . . . | " |
| Château de Suduiraut . . . | Preignac |
| Château Coutet . . . | Barsac |
| Château Climens . . . | " |
| Château Bayle (Guiraud) . . . | Sauternes |
| Château Rieussec . . . | Fargues |
| Château Rabaud . . . | Bommes |

Second Growths

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Château de Myrat . . . | Barsac |
| Château Doisy . . . | " |
| Château Peixotto . . . | Bommes |
| Château d'Arche . . . | Sauternes |
| Château Filhot . . . | " |
| Château Broustet-Nerac . . . | Barsac |

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Château Caillou | Barsac |
| Château Suau | ” |
| Château de Malle. . . . | Preignac |
| Château Romer | ” |
| Château Lamothe | Sauternes |

NOTE.—An authoritative treatise on the Wines of Bordeaux is *Bordeaux et ses Vins*, by Charles Cocks and Edouard Feret. (Bordeaux: Feret et Fils.)

CHAPTER IX

WINES OF GERMANY

For many years before the War a number of the best German wine houses cultivated close relationships with England. Several firms had both English and German partners, and in some instances the families had intermarried. The result was, that when War broke out partners and families whose business and personal interests until then had been identical, found themselves called upon to fight on opposite sides, just as happened in the American Civil War.

In May 1919, during the occupation, I had the honour of staying at Marienburg, near Cologne, with the British Commander-in-Chief, now Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson, and took the opportunity courteously offered me of driving over with Captain Graham de Burgh, the Aide-de-Camp, to Coblenz and Boppard in the wine area. The car was a splendid Rolls-Royce and the driver had his loaded rifle by his side. Captain de Burgh had his revolver discreetly tucked away somewhere about his khaki uniform, but handy in case of need.

First I called on an old friend, partner in one of the largest wine firms in Coblenz and an Englishman. He had been interned in Germany during the War, while his brother and partner had lost his only son, killed while fighting in the British Army.

The German firms that I knew before the War

were pleased to see me and I found that, the War being over, the English disposition was to shake hands with the vanquished. In Cologne I often saw an English Tommy with a German child hanging on to both his hands.

Coblenz was in the American area of occupation, and the magnificent houses and gardens of the German magnates on the banks of the Rhine were occupied by officers and their families, while the owners lived away in the back premises. In one of the wine firms' visiting book, whose previous pages bore the names of the Kaiser, von Hindenburg and von Tirpitz, we opened a fresh "peace page," the British Army, represented by the Aide, Captain de Burgh, signing first at my insistence and the mere civilians afterwards.

We took back to the Commander-in-Chief at Cologne a present of some excellent Berncastler Doctor and Sparkling Moselle, which he, too, received in a spirit of peace. My visit over, I breakfasted one morning in Cologne and flew back to lunch in London as a privileged passenger in the Army aeroplane which, at that time, plied daily with dispatches.¹

The differences which exist between the various vintages on the Rhine are in marked contrast to the fairly uniform quality shown by the wines of Southern Europe. Even in a fine year the yield is by no means uniformly excellent in all parts of the Rhineland. Climatic conditions are not the same in all districts. Moreover, different years seem to suit different kinds of wine. The vineyards in

¹ See the Author's *Fifty Years of Travel*, p. 303.

the most favoured positions, where the grapes ripen soonest, often suffer most from the early spring frosts.

The finest of the Rhine wines come from the district called the Rheingau, which stretches for about 15 miles along the northern bank of the river, from its junction with the Main at Mayence to Rüdesheim, down-stream. At this part of its course the Rhine runs almost east and west, and the Main likewise, so that the stony slopes on the northern side of the valley face the summer sunshine and catch all there is of it. At the same time, they are sheltered from the northern blast by the Taunus range behind them. To these propitious arrangements of nature the wines of the Rheingau owe their excellence and their long-standing fame.

Wine was grown here in the third century, so it is said, and one can readily believe that the worthy monks of those days, with their keen viticultural propensities, would have pounced eagerly on such a spot. A wee bit up the Main is the famous vineyard of Hochheim, and because it was first in the field, or thereabouts, with a wine worth talking about, its shortened title "Hock" became the accepted designation for Rhine wines generally.

Although the vineyards of the Rheingau cover about 5,500 acres, or rather more than $8\frac{1}{2}$ square miles, only a tenth part of this area can be credited to vineyards of special renown. Moreover, as the first quality of wine is only secured in the finest seasons, and as even then the grapes must always be selected with the utmost care from the ripest

bunches, not a drop of the precious juice being allowed to escape, the average production is bound to be limited.

The "cream of the cream" of Rhenish wines is the Schloss Johannisberg, which grows in a most favoured spot near the western limit of the Rheingau. It is remarkable for raciness, delicacy of flavour and bouquet rather than for strength; indeed, these are the generic characteristics of the Rheingau wines, though few of them can rival the Schloss Johannisberg, the sale of whose various qualities in the cask by public auction after vintage is always a notable event.

The other wines of the vicinity, distinguished by the name of Johannisberg-Klaus, and those yielded by the vineyards of Count Schönborn, are also highly esteemed. There is also Johannisberger, produced from the vineyards of the village of that name, but this is inferior to many of the other products of the Rheingau. In this neighbourhood are Rüdesheim, Oestrich, Geisenheim and Rauenthal with its celebrated "Rothenberg," all producing first-class wines.

The Marcobrunn vineyard, between Hattenheim and Erbach, produces a white wine of exquisite flavour and bouquet. The wines, however, which compete most successfully with Schloss Johannisberg, and trench closely upon its celebrity, are the Steinberger, produced from the carefully cultivated vineyards on the hill at the back of Hattenheim, and the Rauenthaler Berg, the best vintages of which are unsurpassed in flavour and quality.

Bingen is a favourable district for strong wines ;

the hill behind it yields the excellent Scharlachberger. Below Bingen, on the opposite bank, is Assmannshausen, whose red wine ranks high and in good vintages vies with Burgundy of the best class, being made from the same species of grape; unfortunately, like the latter, it is often impaired by travelling.

The valley of the Rhine below Bingen produces many pleasant and wholesome wines, but they are inferior to the wines I have already mentioned. Those of Lorch Enghöll, Steeg, Oberwesel and Boppard may be noted among the white. The *Rheinbleicherte* (i.e. *bleich rote* or pale red) of Steeg, Oberwesel and Bacharach, and the light red wines of Salzig, Camp, Horchheim, the Kreutzberg (near Ehrenbreitstein) and Urbar are also esteemed. Most of the wines grown below Coblenz are light red. Linz produces excellent *Rheinbleicherte*.

The valley of the Ahr is the most northern point at which the grape is successfully cultivated. Its light and wholesome *Ahrbleicherte* are chiefly consumed in the neighbourhood of their growth. They are strengthening and astringent in their properties, and resemble Burgundy of an ordinary class. The best are those of Walporzheim, Ahrweiler and Bodendorf.

Rhenish Hesse produces, besides the Scharlachberger, wines of good class, such as Niersteiner, Oppenheimer, Laubenheimer and Bodenheimer, all pleasant wines, though less delicate than those of the Rheingau.

Liebfraumilch (*Lait de Notre Dame*) is a good sound wine which owes its reputation both to its

own quality and also to the quaintness of its name. But the vineyards where it is grown are incapable of producing a tenth part of the wine usually so called, which is taken from neighbouring growths of similar quality. The flat vineyards of Ingelheim, between Mayence and Bingen, yield a good, light red wine.

Rhenish Bavaria yields a vast quantity of wine, generally known as wine of the Haardt or Palatinate. The best qualities are those of Ruppertsberg, Deidesheim and Forst, after which rank those of Ungstein, Dürkheim, Wachenheim and Königsbach. Good red wines are grown at Gimmeldingen and Callstadt. The inferior wines of this district usually have a coarse, earthy flavour.

Markgräfler, the wine of the Duchy of Baden (Affenthal, red; Klingenberg, white), the Neckar wines, and those of the Bergstrasse are consumed almost entirely in their respective districts. Many of the inns on the Middle and Upper Rhine, especially in the smaller towns, have wine on draught which, though not entered on wine lists, is often better than the lower ranks of wines in bottle.

MOSELLE WINES

The wines of the Moselle are chiefly grown amidst rugged and sterile-looking slate rocks. They are distinguished by their delicate, aromatic flavour, though the inferior varieties are apt to be rather acid in bad years. In good years Moselles are exceedingly pleasant to the taste, give an excellent bouquet and make an ideal summer beverage.

They are considered remarkably wholesome, being particularly appropriate to persons of sedentary habits. "*Vinum Mosellanicum est omni tempore sanum*" —Moselle wine is wholesome at all times, as the old lore has it. For these light wines of the Moselle contain very little alcohol; they cleanse the blood, thereby preventing gout and other similar complaints, and generally promoting a cheerful disposition.

The Berncastler Doctor, which my firm first introduced to English physicians about 50 years ago, is the subject of the old tag, "If you drink the Doctor you will never want a doctor." The best of the Moselle wines, besides the Berncastler Doctor, are the Brauneberger and the Dhroner Hofberg; all possess a delicious bouquet. Next to these may be placed the wines of Zeltingen, Graach, Piesport and Winningen.

The Saar wines have even less body than those of the Moselle, but surpass them in aroma. Scharzhofberger, Wiltingen and Grünhaus are excellent wines of this district.

SPARKLING WINES

The effervescing German wines were first manufactured at Esslingen (1826), Heilbronn, Würzburg and Mayence; afterwards at Trier, Coblenz and various other places. These wines, generally known in England as Sparkling Hock and Moselle, are distinguished by the predominance of the flavour of the grape. When obtained from an unexceptionable source, they provide a light, pleasant and wholesome beverage.

The process is similar to that employed in the preparation of Champagne. After the first fermentation is over the wine is put into bottles and a second fermentation is induced by the addition of a small quantity of sugar and by exposure to a moderately warm temperature ; thus carbonic acid gas is generated in the wine. For several years the bottles lie quietly in the cellars, until the moment arrives for the removal of the waste products of fermentation, when they are taken out and placed on racks with their corks downwards for a month or more, and finally opened for the ejection of the sediment. During the whole process about 1 or $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the bottles usually burst.

The wine being thoroughly cleared, the bottles are filled up, a small quantity of "liqueur" (wine and sugar) is added to give the requisite sweetness, and a new cork is put in. For the English market this addition of "liqueur" is very small indeed, about 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., the wines being kept extra dry ; on the Continent the taste is for sweeter wines, which are liqueured with 3 to 5 per cent. The sparkling wine thus laboriously prepared for the market is worth more than double the original still wine from which it was manufactured. Inferior qualities are generally the most effervescent.

CHAPTER X

WINES OF ITALY AND SICILY

IF France holds pride of place among the countries of the world in the area of her vineyards, Italy stands next. France and Italy together furnish two-thirds of the world's vine-planted acreage; the countries of Europe furnish nine-tenths.

A saying in Italy is that the Barolo, like the people of Piedmont, is strong and severe; the Chianti is pretty, delicate and lively, like the people of Tuscany; the Lacrima Christi is hot and fiery, like the Neapolitans; and the Marsala is strong and generous, like the Sicilians.

Piedmont, the north-west province of Italy, undoubtedly produces the best wines in the whole country. The vineyards are mostly found in the hilly districts. Best known is the Barolo, a generous wine, austere, fragrant, dry, with a delicate flavour and bouquet. Barbera is an excellent wine, and a good bottled wine is made in the region of Turin from Freisa grapes. Piedmont also produces some fine liqueur wines, such as the Moscato, a wine made from sun-dried Muscatel grapes.

Emilia, north of the Apennines, is another most important wine-growing province, producing almost as much as Piedmont. The vines are trained up on trees—maple, elm and poplar—in rows from

six to thirty yards or more apart. Trailing in festoons from support to support, they look very picturesque. The favourite Emilian wine is the Lambrusco of Sarbara; when carefully made and bottled at the right time, it is an admirable wine.

Tuscany is celebrated for the abundance and excellence of its wines. The vines are usually grown high on maple trees and trained, as in Emilia, in festoons. The most celebrated Tuscan wine is the Chianti. This wine enjoyed well-deserved renown at the time of the poet Redi (born 1626), and is to-day the best known and best liked of all Italian table wines. There are many other wines of this region.

I have tasted some good wines in the island of Elba, to which the Emperor Napoleon I was banished and whence he escaped. These Elba wines are alcoholic, fragrant and pleasant, and are supposed to be rich in iron and phosphoric acid. They are much used for medicinal wines.

The White Capri, of Campania, straw-coloured, fragrant and fresh, is made of the white Neapolitan grapes. It is a dry wine, rich in delicate perfume. The Lacrima Christi, which is produced on the southern slopes of Mount Vesuvius, is a red luscious wine. There are many legends of the origin of the name Lacrima Christi, of which the following are the best.

Many centuries ago there dwelt half-way up Vesuvius a hermit, who passed his time in prayer, fasting and penitence. This hermit, though living far from everybody, never forgot to render any help he could to travellers who from time to time ascended

the mountain. He also had a store of indifferent wine, which he used to sell to passers-by.

One day he was visited by a stranger, who asked permission to stay with him for a while. This stranger of ingratiating manners was no other than Satan himself, who had it in his mind to get the poor hermit drunk. And indeed he had nearly succeeded in his wicked project—and would have done so had the wine been better—when a sudden thunderstorm came up and drove him away, just in time to save the hermit from perdition.

The good man fell into a deep slumber. When at last he awoke and stretched out his hand for the wine, to moisten his parched throat, he was astonished to find it exquisite.

“ ’Tis the Tears of Christ,” he exclaimed in pious gratitude, “ sent to rescue me from the pit.” So he called the precious draught “ *Lacrima Christi*.”

Another legend accounts for the excellence of this wine by averring that the earth wherein it grows was actually watered by the Tears of Christ. For when Lucifer was cast out of Paradise he thievingly took away with him a clod of the blessed earth, which he let fall with wicked intent in the Gulf of Naples—still called, by reason of its mingled beauty and enticement, “ *The Bit of Paradise* dropped by the Devil.” The Saviour, passing by, and observing how the Devil’s cunning work lured men to sin, was grieved to tears. Where His tears fell the vine sprang up, whose wine by its divine excellence affirmed its sacred origin.

Sicily ranks among the most important wine-growing regions of Italy, producing wine in abun-

dance and of the very finest quality. The country has been ravaged by the phylloxera; consequently, with the exception of a few vineyards in the neighbourhood of Mount Etna, Sicilian wine is made from vines grafted on foreign trunks. The most famous is the Marsala, made from white grapes in the provinces of Trapani, Palermo and Catania.

Marsala, the wine of Sicily, was originally introduced into England by an English merchant named Woodhouse, who was resident in Sicily about the year 1773. It was received with much favour, and gradually a large business resulted. So great were the healthful properties of the wine considered to be that the British Government, in the year 1800, gave orders for the Mediterranean Fleet under Admiral Nelson to be supplied with it.

The original document, signed 19th March, 1800, by the Rt. Hon. Rear-Admiral Horatio Nelson, K.C.B., is still in existence; it is a contract to supply the British Fleet with 500 pipes of Best Marsala Wine, delivered free of freight and other charges. At the foot of the contract Nelson wrote with his own hand a note that the wine was to be delivered as expeditiously as possible and within five weeks of the date of the contract.

Marsala has a fine flavour and bouquet, and is considered one of the most wholesome of wines, besides being moderately priced. The export trade is still largely in the hands of English houses.

Sardinia suffered severely from the phylloxera, which destroyed a number of famous and prolific vineyards. The territory redeemed from the Austrians produces a large amount of wine in the

provinces of Trieste and Istria. The grape vine is also cultivated in Dalmatia. Zara, on the Dalmatian shore, is well-known for the manufacture of Maraschino. Fiume is the chief emporium for the Dalmatian wines.

VERMOUTH

This well-known appetiser and tonic is an industry of Piedmont. It was first prepared in 1786 by the monk Antonio Benedetto Carpano. On tasting it one experiences a "beneficial" feeling, owing to its stimulant and tonic properties operating on the body and promoting the activity of the stomach.

Vermouth is made from white wine, aromatic herbs and sugar. It is delicately perfumed and very clear. The flavour, which varies somewhat in the different makes, depends principally on the judicious selection and blending of the various ingredients.

The real, genuine, typical Vermouth di Torino is based upon Moscato or muscatel wine, in the proportion of one part Moscato to three parts white wine, sweet or dry. Other wines much used in the manufacture are those of San Severo, Piedmont and Puglie. The herb absinthe (*artemisia absinthium*) is an important ingredient.

The making of Vermouth involves many processes. The extracted juices of the aromatic herbs, the sugar and other materials, are put together into a vessel and gradually warmed to a temperature of about 150 degrees F., then cooled to about 40 or 45 degrees F. After filtering, the wine is casked for two or three years, when it is filtered again and

bottled for sale. Casks of wood, cement and glass are used in the process.

Cities which drink most Vermouth are Turin, Milan, Genoa and Rome. But this wholesome wine has a considerable vogue in many other parts of the world, sharing popularity with the French variety, which is drier. Excellent Vermouth is also made in Venice. When you want Italian Vermouth in a French café you ask for “*un Torino.*”

CHAPTER XI

WINES OF HUNGARY, CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND YUGOSLAVIA

TOKAY wines have been famous since the time of the Crusaders; they are said to have been first grown in the thirteenth century. According to the chronicles, the Holy Father at the Council of Trent declared Tokay to be the "King of Wines."

The Tokay wine country is situated in the north-eastern part of Hungary; the mountains and slopes where the vineyards are found embrace an area of about 140 square miles, containing twenty-six villages, but only about one-eighth of the land is under vines.

Vintage takes place late in October. The grapes are allowed to remain on the vines till they become almost like raisins, very rich in sugar; they are then picked one by one and afterwards blended with ordinary unscorched grapes. Treading is done in a vat with the naked feet, after which the must requires a few days' fermentation.

The rich essence of Tokay is very precious and the thickness of the syrup is characteristic. As an old saying has it :

Spain for strength,
France for delicacy,
Italy for sweetness,
Hungary for thickness.

The real Imperial Tokay is not easily forgotten. It has a most luscious flavour, and resembles a liqueur more than a wine; in Vienna and Budapest it fetches the highest price of all wines. Choice Tokay "Essence," fifty years old, is worth about thirty shillings a pint.

Tokay wine has great medicinal properties. It is given to invalids as a restorative and is registered in the books of the Hungarian and Austrian Pharmaceutical Societies. I have in my possession a letter from Sir Francis Laking, physician to the late King Edward VII, recommending Tokay for His Majesty during his illness.

The Imperial Tokay *ausbruch* (or "flowing forth" of the syrup) was mostly kept for the use of the Austrian Emperor and a few of the nobles. From the reign of the Tsarina Catherine of Russia up till the year 1840, a Cossack detachment was stationed at Tokay to guard the wines purchased by the Russian Imperial Household.

Just as the universities of Oxford and Cambridge had a famous toast called "Bishop," made of claret mixed with sugar, oranges and spices, so the students abroad toasted the "Cardinal" with old Rhenish wine and the "Pope" with Tokay.

No country that I know of is more delightful to visit than Hungary. It is a land of romance, and the lure of the gypsies or *tsiganes*, playing their national music on the cymbalo, violin and other stringed and reed instruments in their own natural surroundings, is in no wise exaggerated.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Burgundy vines were introduced into Bohemia in the fourteenth century by the Emperor Charles IV, son of the blind King John of Bohemia, who fell at Crécy. For some reason or other wine-growing in the regions now embraced in Czechoslovakia fell away during the last half-century of the Austro-Hungarian supremacy, notwithstanding that Bohemia was one of the few regions in Europe to escape the phylloxera. Since, however, the country acquired its independence a new spirit of enterprise has arisen, and it may be expected that the culture of the grape will again advance.

At present the Czechoslovaks drink more wine than they grow themselves. Yet they make some very good wines, notably the red Melnik, grown in the valley of the Labe (or Elbe), north of Praha, and the white Jernosek. These are both Bohemian wines and are reputed for their nourishing properties, though the production is quite small.

The province of Slovakia probably grows more wine than all the rest of the country put together. These were formerly classed as Hungarian wines, when the region formed the northern strip of Hungary, and have long enjoyed a very good repute. Carpathian Ruthenia, the extreme south-east province of the republic, was also Hungarian and grows much wine. The wines of Moravia and Bohemia were formerly classed as Austrian.

YUGOSLAVIA

Carlowitz, the robust red wine which was much in vogue fifty years ago, but of which one seldom

hears in these days, is grown on the right bank of the River Danube, thirty miles north of Beograd. This district, formerly in the extreme south of Hungary, is now within the borders of Yugoslavia. The brave, indomitable Serbs grow much wine and frankly rejoice in it, as sensible people should.

CHAPTER XII

WINES OF MADEIRA AND THE CANARIES

MADEIRA

WINTER and spring are the best times for visiting Madeira and its neighbours, the Canaries; also, a little farther afield, the Azores. These islands of the Atlantic are then bathed in sunshine, but they are not too hot, and a wealth of flowers in full bloom is to be seen everywhere. Sea-bathing goes on all the year round. Madeira and the Azores belong to Portugal, and Portuguese is the language spoken. The Canaries are Spanish.

The vine was introduced into Madeira and the Canaries in about the fifteenth century. The original plants are said to have come from the vineyards of Malvasia in the south of Greece, whence the name Malvoisie, corrupted into Malmsey, or else from the island of Candia (or Crete), where Malmsey was much grown.

Madeira is a luscious, full-bodied, light-coloured white wine of the Sherry type. Highly prized formerly as an after-dinner wine, it seems of late years to have gone rather out of fashion, owing no doubt to the modern habit of smoking cigars and cigarettes after the King's health.

Malmsey, a similar wine from the same island, was much esteemed at Court in old days. The name was applied indifferently to the strong sweet

wines from any of the Mediterranean countries. History tells us that George, Duke of Clarence, was drowned in a butt of Malmsey in 1477 by order of his brother, King Richard III. In Elizabethan times it was obviously well within reach of humble folk, not excepting "that arrant, malmsey-nose knave, Bardolph."¹ The Malmsey of the present day is a sweetish wine of delicious flavour, rich, golden-brown colour and good alcoholic strength.

As the consumption of Madeira has not increased in proportion to the yearly produce, a heavy stock of matured wine has accumulated. Consequently, prices have fallen very considerably, enabling the appreciative consumer to secure a good, genuine wine at a much lower cost than formerly. This modern Madeira, however, is a much lighter wine than that which was drunk in the earlier years of last century.

The best vineyards are near Lobos, a picturesque little natural harbour with many fishing boats. The Escrito, Camara de Lobos, Campanaris (Bual) and San Martinho (Verdelho) are the finest grapes in Madeira.

CANARY

SIR TOBY BELCH: "O knight! thou lackest a cup of Canary: when did I see thee so put down?"

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK: "Never in your life, I think; unless you see Canary put me down."

Twelfth Night, I. 3.

In Tudor times and long afterwards "sack" was a generic term for the white wines from Spain

¹ 2 *King Henry IV*, II. 1.

and the Canary Islands. There was Sherry sack, Malaga sack, Canary sack, Palm sack, the latter coming, no doubt, from the island of Palma, one of the Canary group. The origin of the name has been much discussed. Some say that "sack" is simply the French *sec*, "dry." Others, more picturesquely, trace it to the Spanish word *saco*, a bag, from the bags or wine-skins in which the wine was exported, and which are used to this day in Madeira.

Probably sack was lighter and less cloying than Malmsey. It was a favourite wine in the household of King Henry VIII, and was commonly drunk in England in Shakespeare's time. The great Elizabethan dramatist has about forty references to sack in his plays, the majority, I fear, being in association with Falstaff, "that huge bombard of sack." Mistress Quickly, hostess of the Boar's Head Tavern in Eastcheap, describes the powers of Canary wine in her own inimitable malaprop phrasing: "But, i' faith, you have drunk too much canaries; and that's a marvellous searching wine, and it perfumes the blood ere one can say 'What's this'?"¹

Canary sack of the present day is a sweetish wine of the Sherry type.

The Peak of Teneriffe, towering alone 12,000 feet in air, is a famous landmark for sailors and can be seen 150 miles away in clear weather. It is among the volcanic cinders and slags of the mountain that the vines are planted, forming one of the most important products of the island. Orotava, lying at the foot of the peak, is a pleasant

¹ 2 *King Henry IV*, II. 3.

town with good hotels and plenty of amusements—golf, picnics, riding.

They have a favourite horse-back game there called *Corridas de Sortija*, a sort of tournament in which both ladies and gentlemen take part. A bar is set up, from which a tiny ring is suspended by a ribbon of many colours wound round a reel. Equipped with a lance, the horseman rides at full gallop under the bar and essays to put the lance through the ring. The winner takes the ribbon as a prize.

Carnival also is a great institution, and there is much feasting and merry-making before Lent begins. Men and women don fancy costumes and painted masks, dance and romp in the streets, and smother each other and passers-by with paper confetti.

CHAPTER XIII

WINES OF CYPRUS, PALESTINE AND GREECE

CYPRUS

THE Island of Cyprus has been noted for its grapes from time immemorial. The bulk of the wines produced are consumed in the country itself or exported to Egypt. The vineyards are mostly near Limasol and Larnaca.

The only wine I tasted when I visited the island was the wine called *Commanderia*. This is one of the oldest and most famous sweet dessert wines ; it is held, indeed, to have been the original “ nectar of the gods.” In the time of the Knights Templar it acquired great fame ; in fact, the name *Commanderia* is derived from the commandery or station of the Order, upon whose lands the luscious grapes were raised.

The Abbots of Kykko Monastery have maintained from ancient times a well-furnished cellar, and it is their custom, with the Archbishop of Cyprus, to make gifts of vintage brands to distinguished visitors. Presents of this kind were highly valued by the Tsars of Russia, to whom yearly parcels of it were formerly sent.

For making *Commanderia* the grapes are left on the vines until over-ripe ; after picking, they are spread out in the sun for further evaporation before they undergo the usual processes of wine-making.

In this way a sweet wine, rich in sugar and alcohol, and with a characteristic flavour, is produced. Only a limited quantity of Commanderia is made each year; of this a certain part is exported, and fetches a high price, both in England and on the Continent.

Existing stocks are replenished with fresh wine annually. In some cases the original vintage is of such great age that through evaporation it has become a syrup or pulp, which imparts a valuable bouquet to the younger vintage.

PALESTINE

The cultivation of the grape in the region which we now call Palestine precedes the dawn of history. For hundreds, nay, thousands of years, wine made therefrom was drunk by the people with thankfulness and benefit. The advent of the water-drinking Turk cast a blight upon the land; the march of civilisation was stayed for six centuries. As a wine-drinking country Palestine may yet regain that condition of extraordinary prosperity which both the historian and the excavator prove her to have enjoyed in the past.

Where oranges grow in profusion, the vine seems always to be its next-door neighbour, the same climate suiting both fruits. I well remember, when I was cruising in the Mediterranean many years ago, approaching Jaffa, the seaport for Jerusalem, and scenting the fragrance of the orange blossom on the breeze many miles from shore.

In 1885 there was no railway to Jerusalem, nor to any other part of Palestine. Those were interesting days, travelling on horseback and living

in tents, escorted by Arabs and Mohammedan kavasses, dragomen and guides from the Consulate. Little wine was grown then. Indeed, the re-birth and subsequent development of the wine industry are due to the energy of Baron Edmond de Rothschild, of Paris, and a few pioneer Jewish settlers in the latter part of last century.

Rishon-le-Zion ("First in Zion"), now one of the principal wine-producing vineyards, is about eight miles south of Jaffa. The wines have European names allotted to them, such as Sauterne, Hock, Claret, Sherry, Malaga, Marsala, Tokay, with the prefix "Palestine" attached.

That is not right. These famous names have a geographical significance; they each denote a peculiarity of soil and climate, and ought only to be used for the true and characteristic produce thereof. Call a spade a spade. But I am informed that it is to please the English public that a bottle is labelled, for example, "Palestine Whisky!"

GREECE

The fame of the ancient Greek wines is familiar to every properly educated schoolboy. Homer makes it clear that the life of an Achæan hero would scarcely have been worth living without wine. Nestor, the sage, drank eleven-year-old wine, but whether this was the result of his wisdom or the cause of it, we are not told.

Several growths of wine have acquired immortal fame through the entrancing literature of old Greece. The Pramnian and the Maronean were specially celebrated, and it was of the former

that Aristophanes graphically tells us that while new it contracted the eyebrows and forehead into wrinkles, but when properly mature it was nectar.

The ever-delightful poet Theocritus, who lived in the third century B.C., gives us in his "Harvest Home" a glimpse of the way they kept and improved their wines at that time :

"Meanwhile we broke the four-year-old seal from off the lips of the jars, and O ye Castalian Nymphs that dwell on Parnassus' height, did ever the aged Cheiron in Pholus' rocky cave set before Heracles such a bowlful as that ?" ¹

—a proper spirit of appreciation soaringly expressed, after the manner of connoisseurs in all ages.

Soil, sun and sea-breezes produced the fine wines of the isles—the Chian, Lesbian, Thasian, Cretan. From the same regions in later times came much good Malmsey, until the Turks cut off the supply. To this day the Greeks preserve much of their old skill in wine-making, and I have tasted most excellent wines when travelling in the country. Especially pleasant, I thought, were the best growths of the Peloponnese, the south-jutting peninsula of the mainland; the little town of Malvasia, which gave its name to Malmsey, is in this region. The wines of Greece enjoy a good and appreciative market in Egypt and the neighbouring coasts.

¹ Edmonds's translation.

CHAPTER XIV

WINES OF ALGERIA, TUNIS AND MOROCCO

IN 1876, when I first visited Tangiers, I used to gallop over the sands on fast little Barbary horses with small heads and long bushy tails. There was not so much as a wheelbarrow in the place, let alone a wheeled vehicle, and the only hotel was kept by a black man named Martin. We had to engage a soldier from the English Consul before we could ride to Tetuan or anywhere outside the town.

Fifty years afterwards, in the spring of 1925, on my way back from Touggourt, south of Biskra, in the great Sahara Desert, I revisited the great wine-growing region of Algeria, driving through the vineyards from Algiers to Blidah, and round the districts of Oran and Tlemcen, which the French cultivate so well. Then, crossing the frontier between Algeria and Morocco at Oudjda, I came through the immense plain to Taza, not far from the mountains which the Riff tribes inhabit. In this area at that time one passed many French Colonial troops—negroes, Arabs and mounted Spahis. Fifteen miles away the town of Fez stood out on the hill, with mountains all around—a fine panorama.

Fez is by far the most picturesque and interesting Moorish city in Morocco, and is not yet spoiled by modern streets and houses. An old Arab house

has been turned into an hotel, with a large patio, in the middle of which is a fountain with a basin of green, blue, yellow, black and white inlaid Morocco tiles, where the ladies of the harem used to bathe. My bedroom, with iron trellis window, looked over it, and really one felt almost indelicate as one gazed down upon the pretty setting, though the bright gems which once inhabited it had long since fled.

When I visited Casablanca in 1902, there were only a few Moorish houses and no road to Marakeesh. Now there is an automobile service to Marakeesh over a splendid wide road, partly made by the German prisoners. The President of the Aero Club of Morocco, Count Henri de Monti de Reze, entertained me hospitably and gave me some *vin rosé* grown round Casablanca—a very agreeable light wine indeed, especially when slightly iced. In a few years Morocco might become quite a wine-growing country.

The indigenous culture of the vine is of ancient date, the white grapes of the country being consumed as fresh fruit under the Mohammedan regime. European grapes were first planted round about Casablanca in 1908, and a considerable area of ground is now under cultivation, following the methods which have proved so successful in Algeria and Tunis.

ALGERIA

For several centuries before the coming of the French to Algeria in 1830—and fifty years later to Tunis—the coastal regions of north-west Africa, though well adapted to the production of wine,

had been debarred from the enjoyment of its civilising benefits by the domination of the children of the Prophet, who are forbidden the use of wine. Since then the desert has blossomed, wine growing has become a flourishing industry, and a large and prosperous population inhabits the land.

The long, broad belt of fertile territory called Algeria stretches back from the Mediterranean shore in gradually mounting altitude to the Atlas Mountains and thence to the borders of the Great Sahara. It embraces a rich variety of soils and climates, of which the best for wine growing are found over a vast area some 600 miles long and 100 miles wide, behind Oran and Algiers—that is to say, between the seaboard domain of the market-gardener and the higher corn belt, and overlapping both.

So industriously has the culture been pursued in this region, and so useful is the quality of the wine, that Algeria already takes rank as one of the principal wine-producing countries of the world.

The capricious seasons which so often afflict the vineyards of Europe are little to be feared here. The rain comes during the winter months, and the long, dry, cloudless summer provides an abundance of light and heat for the perfect ripening of the grapes, and ultimately for the safe harvesting of the crop. The wine grown in these conditions, if it lacks the delicacy of the precarious northern vintages, is robust and highly alcoholised. For this reason it has been found to serve admirably for mixing with many of the weaker, though more flavoury, wines of France and thither seven-eighths

of the crop is regularly exported. Every year thousands of barrels leave the quays of Oran and Algiers for the ports of Marseilles, Cette, Bordeaux and Rouen.

TUNIS

During the half-century of their occupation of Tunis, the French have taken great pains to establish and develop the wine industry on lines most suited to the soil and climate of the country. In the regions adapted to the vine the rainfall is usually scanty. Consequently, crops are not heavy; on the other hand, the wines as a rule are strong, of good body and colour, and rich in alcohol.

Red wines predominate, though a certain amount of white wine, *vin rosé*, sweet and muscatel wine is also made. The lighter red wines are drunk in the country, but the stouter, like those of Algeria, are freely bought for mixing with the thin, sharp wines of central France. Some of the white wines, both still and sparkling, are excellent, showing good colour and flavour, and improving with age. The Muscat grape flourishes in the hot, dry climate of Tunis, and an effort is being made to develop the growth and sale of Muscat wines, vermouth, *eau de vie* and marc.

CHAPTER XV

WINES OF RUSSIA

THE climate and soil of Russia are not generally suitable to the cultivation of the grape. But in the Crimea and parts of the Caucasus, and along the Black Sea, where the vine grows well, wines of good quality have long been made, though in no great quantity and with little attempt at systematic exploitation of the region.

Before the War, during the reign of the Tsar, travelling in Russia was very easy and comfortable, and I have many happy recollections of excellent dinners served with the wine of the country in Petrograd and Moscow, at the Ermitage and Slavianski restaurants.

The *dîner à la Russe* begins with *vorschmark* (the *smorgasbord* of Sweden), which is taken at a stand-up buffet and consists of various cold snacks laid out on an array of dishes, such as fresh caviare, raw herrings, smoked salmon, sturgeon dried in the sun (*balyk*), raw smoked goose, radishes, cheese and other comestibles. A glass of Riga Kummel (Alasch) made of caraway seeds, or Listofka, a spirit flavoured with black currant, is served with the *hors-d'œuvres*, while Vodka, the national corn spirit, is of course available.

A dinner menu of national dishes which I have kept by me from the old days ran as follows :

1. *Soups* :

Okroshka.—A cold iced soup of kvas (a beverage made of fermented rye), with pieces of herring, cucumber and meat floating in it.

Batvenia.—Another cold soup of green colour.

Sichi.—A very good cabbage soup, sour cream to be added.

Ukha or Fish Soup.—This is rather expensive if made of sterlet, but it is quite good when made of yershi or pope (ruff).

2. *Rastigai*.—Patties of the isinglass and flesh of the sturgeon. Very much like muffins with fish.

3. *Solianka*.—A dish composed of fish and cabbage with cayenne (Krasny Perets).

4. *Pojarskie Kotlety*.—Cutlets of chicken à la Pojarski. Very good. Veal cutlets are a speciality of Moscow.

5. *Porosionch pod khrenom*.—Cold boiled sucking-pig with horse-radish sauce.

6. *Barany-bok s-kashoi*.—Roast mutton stuffed with buckwheat. The buckwheat is a staple food of the country.

7. *Jarkoe*.—The roast, consisting of molodye teterova or young blackcock, riabchik or hazel hen (gelinotte), procurable all the year round, and dupelia or double snipe. Salted cucumbers as salad.

8. *Pirojnoe*.—Sweet dishes. Grief pudding, made principally of buckwheat, is not a bad dish. Nesselrode pudding is an excellent combination of plum pudding and ices, and Moscovite is something between an ice and a jelly flavoured with the fruit of the season.

The national wines, grown on Russian soil in the Crimea and the Caucasus, were served to harmonise with the repast, and very pleasant they were. In time to come, when the present darkness rolls away and a new dawn breaks on Russia, the wine industry will doubtless revive, develop and widely extend.

CHAPTER XVI

WINES OF SOUTH AFRICA

It has sometimes been asserted that the French Huguenots were the first to introduce the vine into South Africa and that they came into the country with a Bible in one hand and a vine in the other. As a matter of fact, however, the vine was introduced into South Africa as early as 1653, the year after the landing of Captain Jan van Riebeeck.

At that time the Netherlands East India Company traded largely with the East Indies via the Cape of Good Hope. One of the articles of their trade was brandy, brought from the Charente in France, through the port of La Rochelle. In the course of their business the Dutchmen had ample opportunity of observing the prosperity of that famous brandy-growing region; hence it is not surprising that, keen traders as they were, they should have set about introducing vines at the Cape with the object of producing the article themselves. The Governor, Van der Stel, gave every encouragement to viticulture, importing vines from France, Germany and Portugal.

The French Huguenots, who mostly came from wine districts in their native land, adapted themselves naturally to the cultivation of the vine, and wine-growing became one of the most important branches of agriculture in South Africa, especially

in the Paarl and Stellenbosch districts, where the Huguenots mostly settled and where the industry is still predominant. Vines are also largely cultivated in the districts of Worcester, Malmesbury, Cape, Wynberg, Constantia, Robertson, Tulbagh and Ceres, Piquetberg, Montague and Caledon, and in many other places on a smaller scale.

When I last visited South Africa, in January 1926, I drank many of the wines at the different farms in Constantia, Wynberg and Stellenbosch, in clubs and hotels, and in the railway dining-cars on the way to the Victoria Falls, and was well content. The Sparkling Red (Burgundy type) and Sparkling White (Moselle type) were excellent.

The favourite drive round Table Mountain from Cape Town—thirty-three miles on a splendid road—takes one home through Tokai, Constantia and Wynberg, that name Tokai being aptly derived, one cannot doubt, from the famous wine of Hungary. On the one hand you have the rugged peaks rising skywards and on the other the ocean stretching away to the horizon, with hundreds of merry bathers close at hand riding the waves on their surf-boards. At Constantia you see fine vineyards, fruit trees, avenues of oaks, and houses in the old Dutch style.

The Government wine farm, Groot Constantia, is planted with some 200,000 vines. The old house, built in 1685, was a beautiful example of an old Dutch homestead, and its recent destruction by fire, with all the old Dutch furniture, is an irreparable loss; it has since been rebuilt. In the cellars lie the huge vats of wine, which are sold by

auction once a year. The upland vineyards of Stellenbosch—one of the oldest Dutch settlements in South Africa—are within an easy morning's drive from Cape Town; Paarl, under the Drakenstein ridge, is not a great deal farther.

Some African wines had at one time a remarkable reputation in Europe, but in recent years this trade has made small headway, owing to a variety of causes, not the least being a lack of uniform quality. It is now possible, however, to secure large quantities of wine of the same type, comparing favourably with the wines of many other countries.

The South African climate permits of wine of almost any type being produced, and the most modern methods of wine-making are adopted. Purity of wines and brandies is guaranteed by stringent legal measures for the prevention of adulteration, and nothing that is not the product of the grape may be added, not even cane sugar for sweetening purposes. The hope prevails, therefore, that in the near future British and Continental consumers may be induced by this high standard of quality to include Cape wines in their selection.

The vine is a plant of the temperate zone, succeeding best between 34° to 45° latitude; at the Cape it is cultivated chiefly between 33° and 35° latitude. In a tropical or sub-tropical climate the plant grows very luxuriantly, but the fruit is not so valuable, because while the sugar content is high the acidity is low; in a cold climate the reverse occurs.

In the south-western districts of the Cape Province, where the vine is chiefly grown, the climate is such as to produce a fruit well-balanced

in sugar and acid. During the spring there are enough fine days with bright sunshine and occasional soaking rain to encourage the vines to bud and make vigorous growth. The early days of summer are hotter, but the humidity in the air is still sufficient to allow the bunches to develop properly. In January and February the grapes reach their maturing stage under a cloudless sky and a tropical temperature.

For light wine, the viticulturist gathers his crop at maturity; for the heavier wines he allows the grape to over-mature. In these climatic conditions there is no great risk in exposing the crop for the longer period.

The Constantia area lies in the Cape Peninsula, where the influence of the sea is very noticeable. Rainfall is heavy, and the air contains a fair amount of moisture even during the summer months, so that such common vine diseases as oidium and anthracnose need to be specially watched for. Constantia produces excellent light white wines, but it is especially famous for red wines of the Claret and Burgundy types. Table grapes do well here, and are largely exported.

The influence of the sea is also noticeable in the Stellenbosch district. The annual rainfall is good, and, though the summer months are fairly hot, a south-west breeze usually blows in the afternoon, so that the nights are cool. Stellenbosch produces good red and light white wines, as well as excellent table grapes for export.

At Paarl, on the other hand, the influence of the sea is rarely felt, rainfall is slightly less, and the

summer climate is a good deal hotter. Grapes ripen about a fortnight before Stellenbosch and nearly a month before Constantia. The vintage is in February, and the wine-maker often has trouble with high temperatures during fermentation. On an average, the wines are more alcoholic than those of Constantia and Stellenbosch, and good wines of the Sherry and Port type are produced. The climate also allows the curing of sun-dried raisins. Earliest of the south-western districts, Paarl is first in the market with table grapes for local and export purposes.

Tulbagh is hot and dry in summer, but the nights are usually cool. This district produces some of the best light white wines.

At Montague, Robertson and Worcester, Karroo-like conditions prevail; rainfall is low and the summer is hot and dry. Vines are mostly cultivated under irrigation, a practice which is not adopted to any extent in other districts, and as the soil is very fertile enormous crops are gathered. Raisin grapes do exceptionally well and the climate is very suitable for making sun-dried raisins, sultanas and currants. The wines are nearly all of the heavier types and include some of the best sweet wines in the Cape.

The vine can probably be grown with success and profit on a greater variety of soils than any other cultivated plant. The soils in the wine-growing districts of the Cape vary greatly; often in the same vineyard there are vines growing on sandy soils, light, medium and heavy loams, and stiff clays. With good manuring, even the sandy soils produce

good crops. What are known as the Karroo soils originate from a shale rich in basic elements, which weathers fairly easily ; these red and yellow soils are very fertile, and produce a grape with a very high sugar percentage.

Favoured thus by a benign climate, suitable soils and a minimum of vine diseases, the South African wine-grower finds good profit in his undertaking. The crops harvested are often astonishing—half as heavy again as in any other country on an average, and in the inland districts over twice as heavy. There are plantations in the Cape Peninsula which yield $6\frac{1}{2}$ tons of fruit to the acre, and in the Robertson and Montague districts anything up to 18 tons may often be gathered.

Generally speaking, a yield of 5 tons to the acre may be expected from well-cared-for vines growing on a fairly fertile soil. As an acre of vines can be cultivated and harvested for £6 a year, and as the grower can reckon on getting, as a rule, £4 to £6 a ton for his crop, the margin is a comfortable one. The vine is such a sure and regular yielder that a bad crop is practically unknown.

The best-known European varieties are grown, both for wine-making and for table grapes. Promising new varieties are imported, tested at the Government institutions after a period of quarantine, and then, if found to be of any value, distributed among growers.

Phylloxera has been in the country since 1886, but is kept so well in hand by the use of tested stocks that new plantations can be established without fear. The climate generally does not

favour the development of diseases, and the risk is so slight that many vineyards are never treated against disease at all. The study of viticulture is encouraged in every possible way.

The abundance of the land is astounding. Fruits ripen all the year round. Consider this for a "Gardener's Calendar" :

January.—Apricots, early peaches, plums, also pears and apples of the earlier varieties, and pine-apples.

February.—Apples, pears, peaches, nectarines, plums, late apricots, almonds, figs, melons, pine-apples, and grapes.

March.—Apples, pears, peaches, and nectarines of the later sorts, quinces, melons, plums, almonds, pine-apples, and grapes in quantities.

April.—Late pears and apples, prunes and quinces, pine-apples, bananas, walnuts, chestnuts, and Cape gooseberries.

May.—Latest apples and pears, guavas, walnuts, chestnuts, almonds, and Cape gooseberries.

June.—Oranges, naartjes, and in fact the whole tribe of citrus fruits. Custard apples and pine-apples.

July.—Citrus fruits of all kinds, and the guava and custard apple.

August.—Citrus fruits of all kinds, and the guava and custard apple.

September.—Citrus fruits and the guava.

October.—The Japanese loquat and early strawberries.

November.—Early figs, strawberries, early plums, and apricots.

December.—Figs, early plums, and pears, strawberries, apricots and early peaches.

In such a climate one can well understand that the wine industry, aided by expert advice from Europe, will continue to increase, and although the wines of South Africa can never be expected to equal the wines grown in Europe, with its matchless advantages of soil and climate, they are pure juice

of the grape and eminently wholesome, pleasant and refreshing.

NATIVE BEER

The natural drink among the native races of Africa is beer, made by the women and girls by a process of fermenting maize. Some use honey from bee-hives. Very often on *safari* in Kenya and Tanganyika, and among the Barotse up the Zambezi river, I have seen them making beer in their kraals. It is a pleasant drink in summer. Native beer is sold in all reserves and native villages, though it is not supposed to be legal. Beer, tom-toms and singing at their many festivals, weddings, circumcision and other rites, with dancing in the evenings round the camp-fires, make their lives tolerable and happy.

In Durban there is a brewery for brewing Kaffir beer, which is very weak and is sold largely in Natal among the Zulus.

CHAPTER XVII

WINES OF AUSTRALIA

THE date of the introduction of the vine into Australia has been variously set down by different investigators, the years 1815 and 1828 being principally favoured. It would seem, however, that plants were brought out with the first colonising fleet in 1788; consequently, the Australian vine is as old as Australian settlement. The area under vines in 1797 was 8 acres.

From New South Wales the cultivation spread to Victoria and South Australia, and these states have now far outstripped the mother state in viticulture. In Queensland and Western Australia, also, vine-growing has been carried on for many years, but much of Queensland is too hot and the western state is youthful still. The Tasmanian climate is not favourable to the growth of grapes.

The Australian wine-grower has had his troubles and his disappointments. Planting his vines sometimes in too rich a soil, he found that his full-bodied musts would not produce the light and flavoury wines which people liked and wanted. Then again he was hampered, curiously enough, by the want of suitable maturing vats and casks, made of seasoned material which would impart no foreign flavour to the wine.

Time and experience have largely remedied these defects, and Australia now produces good light wines

as well as full ones, with the natural aroma unimpaired. A variety of the eucalyptus tree has been found which provides admirable timber for wine staves. Casks made of this wood may be laid aside for months and taken into use again without re-seasoning—a troublesome and costly process; nor do they flavour the wine. The timber is so well thought of by wine-shippers that plantations of it are now being made in Portugal.

Australian wine-growers have always had to contend with the artificially high cost of Australian labour, in comparison with the older wine-growing countries. In some measure this handicap has been overcome by the use of machinery, which has supplanted the traditional processes of wine-making to an astonishing extent, though no machine has yet been invented which will actually gather the grapes from the vines.

Notwithstanding her isolated position, Australia did not escape the abominable phylloxera. Various outbreaks have afflicted her vineyards, especially in Victoria and New South Wales. As in other parts of the world, the pest has been combated by extensive uprooting in infested areas, and replanting with any but disease-resistant stocks is now prohibited by law.

Twenty years ago, in 1904–5, the area under vines was about 65,000 acres, say a hundred square miles. Then a general decline set in, and during the decade before the War the acreage fell steadily away. But the growing scarcity of wine in the European markets and the prospect of rising prices stimulated the Australian farmer to extend his

production. Year by year the planted area increased, until the "previous best" was passed and left far behind. The Australian vineyards to-day cover well over a hundred thousand acres, with South Australia leading and Victoria well up behind her. The wine production in South Australia in 1926 was 12,000,000 gallons.

Nevertheless, the production of wine has not increased so rapidly as the suitability of soil and climate would seem to warrant. The cause is probably two-fold. In the first place, there are not enough Australians, nor are they yet a wine-drinking people. In the second place, the wines of Australia, being comparatively new-comers, find difficulty in establishing a footing in the markets of the old world, especially as the choicest growths, of which there is never too much, seldom leave the country.

Active steps are being taken in various ways to bring the Australian wines under notice, and it may be hoped that when their qualities are more widely recognised the wine production of Australia will increase. The wines have a high standard of purity, and only pure spirit distilled from Australian grapes under Government supervision may be used for making wines of the Port type; much of this spirit is made from grapes grown by ex-service men on their settlements.

While travelling in the country in 1923, I tried some excellent wines at the Union Club, the Australia Club, Sydney, and the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron Club.

Quantities of grapes are grown for table use—more than half the planted acreage—and a consider-

able export of the fresh fruit has been developed. Raisins of excellent quality are made and exported, by buying which our British housewives may help their kith and kin beyond the seas.

NEW ZEALAND

No wines are grown in New Zealand. The climate much resembles our own, and is not hot enough for the vine. It is a glorious country, a mixture of the very best of all Europe—scenery, rivers, lakes, fjords and mountains.

When travelling in New Zealand, North and South Islands, I was much interested to hear about the Government Control Bill. This measure was introduced to enable *vox populi* to decide whether the sale of alcoholic beverages should remain in private hands or be taken over by the Government. Nothing came of it. New Zealand did not want the Government to control the liquor business, and wisely so, for I was informed that everything managed by the Government showed large losses!

The best English is spoken in New Zealand, with no hint of Cockney slang or American accent. Indeed, the elocution of the New Zealander is so good and his articulation so clear that concert programmes are unnecessary; you can follow the words without. The voices of the Maoris are melodious, and singing is a natural gift with them.

CHAPTER XVIII

WINES OF KASHMIR

KASHMIR—sometimes spelt Cashmere, Cashmeer or Cashmire—is a mountainous country embedded in the great Himalayas on the north-west border of Hindustan.

It may be simply described as a superb valley, surrounded by high snow-clad mountains and traversed by the River Jhelum, with numerous smaller valleys and glens opening into it. It has charming scenery, a lovely climate and fertile soil. On the surrounding hill-tops is rich pasture, where all kinds of wild flowers grow and where, in the summer months, herds of goats, sheep, ponies and cattle feed under the care of herdsmen, who live in log huts.

An oasis in the midst of rocks, snow and glaciers, Kashmir is looked upon as a paradise by Hindus and Mohammedans alike. Its great elevation makes it much cooler than India and it is used as a health resort by dwellers in the hot plains. From the middle of June to the middle of September is the hottest time and the season of the tormenting mosquito. But by the middle of October rich autumn tints are on the trees and one can have a fire in the evening. The months of spring and autumn are the best for travel; May is the best month of all.

Kashmir is a country to suit everybody's taste.

For the sportsman there are the fox, jackal, bear, leopard, snow-leopard and monkey, and in the mountains the ibex, markhor, bara singh and other animals. Birds are innumerable, from eagles, hawks, vultures and falcons to the swan, duck, goose, partridge, pheasant, snipe, woodcock, quail, cuckoo, nightingale, wryneck, swallow, lark, kingfisher, and many singing birds. Fish is an important food for Kashmiris who live near the lakes, and is frequently speared. The mahseer is caught in the Jhelum below Srinagar.

The fruits of Kashmir are the apple, pear, grape, mulberry, walnut, hazel, cherry, peach, apricot, raspberry, gooseberry, currant, strawberry and some others. Every villager has his small garden plot, where potatoes, turnips, asparagus, peas, carrots, onions and tomatoes grow well. The Kashmiris also eat many wild herbs of the non-poisonous kind. Thistles, nettles, wild chicory, dandelion, wild rhubarb and asparagus all go into the pot, so that a man can live well on nature's products alone.

In a land so blessed in soil and climate, it would be strange if wine growing had not also been tried. Persian vine cuttings were first introduced under the charge of two Persians in H.H. Maharajah Ranbir Singh's time (acc. 1857), and cuttings were afterwards imported from France. When the phylloxera attacked the vines, American plants were brought in, and they are now replacing the Bordeaux vines.

The vineyards are under the direct management of the State, and French experts are engaged to direct them: when I was there Bouley was in

charge of the vineyards, and Peychand of the distillery overlooking the Dal Lake.

Kashmir wine and brandy have always stood in good repute with those who know the country, and certainly the red wine which I drank at the Residency has a most promising future, though at present the cost of transport and the duties at the frontier make it difficult to export wine to India at a low or moderate price.

Srinagar, round which the wine districts lie, is 150 miles from Murree and 37 more from Rawal Pindi. The "City of the Sun" stands at an altitude of about 5,250 feet, and became the capital of Kashmir about A.D. 960. It is very old and picturesque, with its bungalows, bachelor quarters and numerous house-boats, built of long chenar planks, moored along the banks of the Jhelum. Europeans have named it "the Venice of Asia."

The Wine Factory is on the shore of the famous Lake Dal or City Lake, which is about 5 miles long and $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles broad, and mostly covered with high reeds, bulrushes and floating gardens. Here, gliding in a little shikara punt under many a picturesque wooden bridge, one may visit the pleasure gardens made by the Emperor Jehangir, who married the lovely Nurmahal and buried her in the matchless Taj Mahal at Agra. Life in Srinagar is the ideal *vie au grand air* of the "wet bob," with its water parties and picnics in the canals and lakes, its camping parties among the groves of chenar trees, and the snow-capped Himalayas always in the distance. I have not seen any corner of the world more pleasant.

When I first visited Kashmir in 1892, long before motor-cars were invented, the only means of transport was the native *tonga*, a two-wheeled vehicle drawn by two small horses which always travelled at full gallop, the driver blowing a bugle as he rounded the sharp curves and corners of the road. Posting-stations for changing horses and *dak bungalows* to sleep in were well organised. There were no customs to pay nor books to sign, and at the *dak bungalows* I used to help myself to provisions and wines out of the cupboards and leave the money on the shelf.

The honesty of the Englishman in India in those early days was proverbial. Payments to the natives were arranged by one's bearer or interpreter; if he cheated you himself, he would let no one else do so, and the net result was really advantageous to the traveller's finances.

Motor-cars now run from the railway terminus at Rawal Pindi, but if one has time it is more enjoyable to hire a *tonga* as far as Baramoola and there take water. Murree, on the way, is a hill sanatorium about 5,000 feet high with a cheerful smell from a brewery, where excellent light beer is brewed from hops grown in Kashmir. Thence the road winds through villages by the side of the Jhelum river to the town of Baramoola. Here the dress, language and features of the people proclaim that one is in Kashmir proper.

Nothing is more enjoyable after the sweltering plains of India than the twenty-hour journey up the Jhelum, with the grand snowy mountains of the Himalayas ever before one's eyes, and on either

side the verdant banks enfolding the glassy waters of the river. I was able to hire two *doongas*, one for myself and the other for the servants, including my bearer, the boatman, his family and the baggage.

A *doonga* is a long punt, 50 or 60 feet from nose to stern, flat-bottomed, with a roof covering of straw and reed. Inside are tables and chairs, a bed with one's own mattress and sleeping bag, and several baskets of flowers. Mats cover the sides to give privacy, keep the small Noah's Ark cool, and shut out the rain. The women, who are supposed to be noted for their beauty, share the work with the men. It is the women who mostly do the towing, trudging along the bank barefoot and singing. They also do the cooking—the inevitable *poulet au riz*, which is the standard dish of the Khansamah.

CHAPTER XIX

WINES OF THE ARGENTINE AND CHILE

FEW people in the Western Hemisphere have any conception of the enormous wine industries which have grown up in the Argentine and Chile, largely during the lifetime of the present generation.

In the Argentine, before the year 1885, grape-growing and wine-making were practised in a very rough-and-ready fashion. The region now known as the Province of Mendoza was for the most part a sparsely populated waste, with isolated settlements hugging the river banks. To-day that desolate, scrub-covered waste is one of the richest wine-making districts in the world. How has that miracle been accomplished ?

Mendoza, the centre of the wine industry, is tucked under the eastern flank of the mighty Aconcagua, 23,350 feet high, which has only been ascended twice since Fitzgerald conquered it thirty years ago. From the white peaks of the Andes the melted snow leaps down in racing torrents. These torrents, combining, descend upon the north-western and western portions of the province in several fine rivers, whose exhaustless flow has been diverted by irrigation works to water the thirsty soil of countless vineyards.

These vineyards of the desert now cover some 280 square miles of fertile, smiling land and produce three-fourths of all the wine grown in the River

Plate. Mendoza, which in early colonial days was merely a post-house on the route over the Andes, and did not even belong to the River Plate at all, but to the Reino de Chile, has grown into a prosperous and wealthy city of 75,000 inhabitants, with broad tree-shaded streets, spacious houses, a splendid park and gardens, and a twelve-mile avenue leading from the city to a little round hill called the Cerro San Martin.

The Cerro is an offshoot of the great Andes, and it is appropriately crowned with statuary commemorating the celebrated Army of the Andes, whose route through the mountains the eye may trace from where one stands. Spread out like a map below is tree-embowered Mendoza, half encircled by the silver river feeding innumerable channels between long lines of vineyards; where these channels end, vegetation ceases and the desert begins.

Year by year the vines of Mendoza produce half a million tons of grapes, from which are pressed some ninety million gallons of wine, worth more than twenty million pounds. The province supports no fewer than 1,500 *bodegas*, or wine-making and storing establishments, among which are some of the biggest of their kind in the world. No visitor should leave the city without seeing one or more of them.

San Juan, a little to the north of Mendoza, ranks next among the wine-growing districts of Argentina, supplying about a fifth of the total production.

There is no great export of Argentine wines; they are mostly drunk as table wines in the country

itself. The people are wine-drinkers, happy and prosperous; nourished and fortified by their wines, they will endure and wax mightily in all the arts of life.

CHILE

Travelling up from the Falkland Islands through the wonderful Strait of Magellan, with its fine glaciers and snow-clad mountains, the first port one makes in Chile is Punta Arenas—"Sandy Point"—the southernmost town in the world. Ensconced gratefully in the English Club at tiffin, I tasted for the first time the wines of Chile.

They are excellent wines, many of them quite good enough for export, were there any wine-drinking market within reasonable distance. As it is, they are mostly consumed, like those of the Argentine, in the country of their origin as *vin ordinaire*, red and white. All the big liners sailing on that coast produce a full wine list of Chilean wines, with the names of the different growers and vineyards attached.

Chile has about 170,000 acres under the grape, and her vintage is about a thousand million gallons of wine. In the 200-mile passage from Coronel (36° S.), where the naval battle was fought in 1914, to Valparaiso, the "Pearl of the Pacific" and the principal port of Chile, one sees the vineyards and fruit trees of all kinds stretching back to the western foothills of the Andes.

From the ship at her moorings the snow-capped peaks of the towering *cordillera* present a majestic panorama, while at night the Southern Cross

gleams overhead and the city is ablaze with myriads of lights. Vina del Mar, the residential suburb of Valparaiso, with its racecourse and sports ground, is a great society gathering-place in the summer season, and visitors come to it from Santiago, the capital of Chile, and even across the continent and over the mountains from Buenos Ayres.

Few wines are grown north of Coquimbo (30° S. lat.), or south of Valdivia (40° S. lat.) The summer begins in December and lasts till March.

PERU

The only indigenous liquor I tasted in Peru was Pisco, made from the sugar cane. Pisco is a seductive but powerful spirit, containing a very high percentage of alcohol. Even those who are well accustomed to it speak with respect of its potency, and urge caution upon the stranger who desires to yield to its allurements.

CHAPTER XX

RESTRICTIVE LAWS IN CANADA, NORWAY AND SWEDEN

CANADA : STATE CONTROL

CANADA has adopted the policy of State Control, after passing through the wilderness of Prohibition. The provinces of Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan have all a very similar method of distribution. Wines and beers are obtainable without limit, but spirits only in quantities of one bottle at a time.

In the province of Ontario the trade is in the hands of the Government dispensaries. Spirits can only be bought when you have a certificate from a medical practitioner. The Quebec Liquor Commission publish their price lists in the two languages, French and English, and here the sale of wine is far ahead of spirits on account, no doubt, of the preponderance of the French-descended population.

A very large revenue is earned by these Government Liquor Commissions, especially those on the orders of the United States. The citizens of the great Republic are very partial (pardonably so, to be sure) to the holiday resorts of Canada, where wines and spirits are procurable. Probably a good deal is also smuggled over to the "dry" country.

NORWAY : GOVERNMENT MONOPOLY

Norway, rugged and grand, the land of the "northern dawn," is full of richness and charm and natural beauties. Many times have I visited it, though never too often, from Oslo to Hammerfest, and across Lapland from Bosskop to Karasjok and Finland.

The climate of Norway much resembles that of the north of Scotland, with much rain on the west coast, especially at Bergen and Stavanger, and most of all in the Søndfjord, which has an annual fall of nearly 120 inches. Notwithstanding the high latitude, the fjords are never frozen even in the coldest winter, owing to the Gulf Stream and warm Atlantic water sweeping into them. Above the Arctic Circle the days are dark in winter and nights light in summer.

In these cold, dreary, sunless winters, alcohol in moderation is a virtual necessity, to warm the body and cheer the spirits. Accordingly, for centuries there were many distilleries manufacturing a spirit called Aquavit from corn and potatoes. Of late years, however, the institution of a State wine monopoly has severely interfered with their activities. The *Vin Monopolet* came into existence after a short period of Prohibition imposed during the War.

A continuance of Prohibition proved impracticable because, in order to ensure markets for her staple exports of fish, Norway was obliged to accept the wines of her chief customers. In 1921 Norway agreed by Treaty to import from France nearly

4,000 hectolitres of wine and 5,000 hectolitres from Spain. In 1923 Portugal demanded the obligatory importation by Norway of 8,500 hectolitres as a *quid pro quo* for a Treaty favouring Norwegian shipping and fish. A hectolitre is 22 gallons, so from these three wine-growing countries alone Norway must take about 385,000 gallons, or more than 2,250,000 bottles of wine in every year.

The fish is mostly cod, caught off the Lofoden Islands and the coast of Finmark, salted and dried. It has an enormous sale in Roman Catholic countries like Spain, Portugal, Italy, Brazil and the Argentine, and when well steeped in several changes of cold water and properly cooked is very good and wholesome to eat, though I must admit that when a cargo of *bacalao* is unloading in Oporto on a sultry day the odour which drifts across the water is in marked contrast, shall I say, to the waft of orange blossoms blown to the mariner off Jaffa.

When the *Vin Monopole*t was established, all trade stocks of wines were taken over by the Norwegian Government. Importation, except through the *Monopole*t, was interdicted, and all private trade in wine was prohibited. *Vin Monopole*t stores are now established in most of the large towns, where wines like Champagnes, Clarets, Burgundies, Ports and Sherries may be freely bought. But if you want Whisky or spirits of any kind you must go to a doctor. After writing down your name, nationality, age, address and alleged infirmity ("old age" will do quite well), he presents you with a *resept* to purchase a bottle of Whisky from the apothecary. Needless to say that, as in

America, plenty of smuggling goes on, which gives the customs and the police a lot of extra work and involves the Government in great expense.

Serie nr. 006357 **A RESEPT**
 Resept nr. 000012
 for Mr. Frank Heder Butler
 (patientens fulle navn og alder)
88 Fina. Lundan
 (stilling og bopæl)
 Rp.
 1 fl. - whisky
 On
 1/2 anbol.
 (brugsanvisning)
 Ekspedert
 (dato og år)
 (underskrift)
 (lægens adresse, datum og årstid)

NORWEGIAN DOCTOR'S PRESCRIPTION AUTHORIZING THE "PATIENT" TO BUY A BOTTLE OF WHISKY AT THE CHEMIST'S. AUGUST 7, 1925.

RATIONING IN SWEDEN

Sweden grows neither hops nor vines for making either beer or wine. Yet, as in Norway, the cold climate and the long dark winter make alcohol in some form or other a practical necessity. Consequently, there were many distilleries for making

spirits out of potatoes, and many of the peasants even manufactured their own, for potatoes were cheap. These products were consumed in large quantities, and it was, in fact, the abuse of them that led to the present system of rationing the population of Sweden.

Now, if you want to buy wine, Whisky, Brandy, Swedish Punch, liqueurs or Swedish Brandy (potato spirit), you must fill up a form giving your name and occupation and the amount you pay in taxes. Then a *motbok* (passbook) is given you, showing how many bottles you are allowed a month.

A company called the *Aktiebolaget Vin och Sprit centralen* holds a monopoly from the Government for the sale of wines and spirits wholesale during the period 1924-8. This company was founded in 1917 and bought up the majority of the distilleries; later on, in 1917-18, it acquired all the private wine merchants' businesses.

Sprit centralen distributes a small dividend to its shareholders and the surplus earnings are at the disposal of the State. In the catalogue of wines there are 862 different sorts of wines and 263 kinds of spirits, and I found it cheaper to buy Whisky in Stockholm than to bring it from London, paying duties and freight.

The people of Sweden refused Prohibition. A Bill for a plebiscite on the question was introduced in the Swedish Parliament in August 1922. The result of this plebiscite, in which 55 per cent. of the possible voters took part (63 per cent. of the men and 48 per cent. of the women), was 889,132 votes for Prohibition (401,993 men and 487,139 women)

and 925,097 votes against (580,066 men and 345,031 women). Majority against, 35,965; the men just saved the day.

Whether the present restrictive system is good or bad is difficult to decide as yet. There is much smuggling, principally from Germany and Esthonia, and an enormous extra staff of Custom House officers and police has been required to stop the cargoes brought by small motor-boats to the numerous little islands round the coast.

CHAPTER XXI

BRANDY: COGNAC AND JONZAC

COGNAC is rather off the beaten track, but it may be conveniently reached by motor-car from Bordeaux, travelling northwards through Jonzac, where there are many fine distilleries. When visiting the Brandy country I have found Angoulême, about thirty-one miles from Cognac, a useful centre at which to stay. Angoulême, like Poitiers, is full of interest, both historic and picturesque. It stands on a height between two rivers, the Charente and Anguinne, not far from the Petite and Grande Champagne, where the best grapes are grown.

In Cognac and the surrounding district are stored huge vats of old brandies, which are refreshed from time to time with good vintage years. The wines from which it is made are of ancient repute. It is recorded that in the year 1214 Philippe Auguste, King of France, enjoined the provinces of Aunis, Saintonge, and the Angoumois to send specimens of their wines to Paris, where a national exhibition of the produce of French vines was about to be held. Both the King and his councillors expressed themselves highly pleased with the fruity wines from the three provinces, which are now exactly comprised in the departments of the Charente and Charente-Inférieure. To these, generally termed the two Charentes, are confined all the genuine growths of wines from which real Cognac is derived.

Authentic documents prove beyond a doubt that in the year 1323 wines from those provinces were shipped from the port of La Rochelle to northern countries, particularly England, Scotland and Scandinavia. Later on, the Dutch, the great sea-carriers of the seventeenth century, were wont to sail up the River Charente and buy from the growers the good wines of the "Borderies," on which they made a handsome profit by selling them to their own people or the Irish.

To meet the demands of this Dutch trade the natives of Cognac and the region thereabout fell to planting vines in the greater part of their land, and carried the practice to such lengths that the supply soon exceeded the demand. The inevitable result was a crisis very much akin to that which prevailed some years ago in the south of France. Huge stocks of wine accumulated for which no purchasers could be found. Moreover, some of the wines, carelessly made, would not keep.

At this juncture, towards the year 1630, it occurred to a few of these producers to reduce the bulk and increase the keeping properties of their wines by distillation, a process invented by the Greeks, but until then seldom used outside the apothecary's laboratory. The idea was found to be not only practicable but also profitable; so much so, indeed, that what had formerly been a surplus soon became a deficit. Consequently, the cultivation of the vine spread gradually all over the district.

In the reign of Napoleon III, thanks in great measure to the English Free Trade Laws, the Cognac district had reached an astonishing height

of prosperity. Then suddenly, in 1875, it was invaded by the *phylloxera vastatrix*, that terrible insect scourge which attacks the roots of the grapevine and gradually kills the plant. In a few years Cognac was laid waste; absolute ruin seemed to threaten the Brandy industry, which until then had triumphed serenely over all its competitors.

By good fortune, however, a certain stretch of country in the immediate vicinity of Cognac was not attacked, and the vineyards there continued to produce a modicum of wine for the distilleries. This land, known as the Pays-Bas or Low Country, is in some places only 40 feet above sea-level and it owed its salvation to the fact that every winter regularly it is submerged. This yearly flooding of the vines prevents the breeding of the phylloxera insect; hence, in this district, we still see the old original French vine flourishing as of yore, defying both time and weather.

But the vine-growers of the Charentes refused to believe that their vines were lost beyond recovery; with praiseworthy enterprise they combined to crush the common enemy, calling science to their aid. Research laboratories were established and lengthy experiments conducted. The calcareous nature of the soil, which has an immense influence on the quality of the wines grown in the Cognac district, made the reconstitution of the vine-stock supremely difficult. But in the end the vine-growers triumphed over every obstacle.

Renouncing old methods, they have adapted their traditional skill and tireless labour to modern conditions with such success that they have not

only stamped out the disease, but also increased the quantity and improved the quality of the yield. The name of Pasteur will always be revered in Cognac, because it is to the genius of the great French bacteriologist that success was ultimately due.

Nor must it be forgotten that, however great the mischief wrought by the phylloxera, it could never injure those natural allies, soil and climate. It is the soil and the climate, working together on the fruit of the vines, that give to the produce of the two Charentes their unrivalled flavour and fragrance.

CHAPTER XXII

“ WINE ” OF SCOTLAND : WHISKY

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,
Of noble enterprise,
For if you do but taste his blood,
’Twill make your courage rise ;
’Twill make a man forget his woe ;
’Twill heighten all his joy !

ROBERT BURNS (1759-1796).

SCOTCH Whisky, the “ wine ” of Scotland, has been for many years a beverage of general use and renown among the English-speaking races the world over. Nor is there any civilised people inhabiting the earth to-day to whom it requires introduction. In literature its fame is established for ever through the immortal works of Robert Burns.

The origin of the distillation of spirits from cereals is lost in the mists of antiquity, but the art is believed to have been brought to the British Isles from the Far East. Certainly, spirits distilled from grain have been in common use in the Three Kingdoms for centuries.

The name “ whisky ” is probably the outcome of an attempt to pronounce the Gaelic *uisge beatha*—water of life—or *usquebaugh*, a later form. It is mentioned in Scottish records as early as the fifteenth century, and by the sixteenth century

domestic distillation had become very common. Even in Tudor England, which always had a ready welcome for a good drink, Scotch Whisky was held in great repute.

The history of the industry has been somewhat chequered, mostly because at an early date it was pounced upon by the revenue authorities as an appropriate or, at least, a convenient object of taxation. Retailers of spirits were taxed during the Rebellion, and Cromwell imposed an excise duty of 2*d.* a gallon. The taxes were farmed out for collection, or else a fixed sum was levied on the locality. In the eighteenth century the trade developed rapidly, large quantities of spirits being sent to England.

Meanwhile, however, the system of taxing the “wash” according to the quantity of spirit it was presumed to yield, was gradually tightened up until the Lowland distillers were in danger of absolute ruin. And when, in 1786, after much agitation, they succeeded in getting a fixed licence duty on the still itself, this was found to operate so much in favour of their own industrious selves, that the duty was rapidly increased and the presumptive charge reimposed. So once again excessive taxation brought the industry to the verge of ruin.

The natural consequence was that in a very short time the Whisky trade had passed almost entirely into the hands of illicit distillers and smugglers.

Some idea of the prevalence of smuggling at the beginning of the nineteenth century may be

gathered from the fact that in Edinburgh for every licensed distiller there were fifty unlicensed. In the Highlands, when the legitimate trade had the indiscretion to interfere with the illicit, an indignant populace burnt down their distilleries.

At length, in 1817, the true solution was found—a moderate tax on the actual output of spirit. The legitimate distillers were soon on their feet again, the London market was re-opened, and the industry flourished so well that the number of distilleries was trebled in a single year. In 1822 the duty was extended to the whole of Scotland, and in 1826 it was fixed at the very modest figure of 2*s.* 10*d.* the proof gallon.

Since then the rate has varied from time to time, but successive Chancellors of the Exchequer have seen to it that the general trend shall be upwards. At the outbreak of the Great War the duty stood at what was then a maximum figure of 14*s.* 9*d.* the proof gallon. In 1918 it was increased by 15*s.* 3*d.* to 30*s.*, then in 1919 by 20*s.* to 50*s.*, and finally in 1920 by 22*s.* 6*d.* to 72*s.* 6*d.* the proof gallon, or 8*s.* 5½*d.* per bottle. At that fantastic figure it still stands.

No Whisky can be cleared as duty paid for consumption until it has reached a minimum age of three years. In practice, proprietary whiskies are very much older than that when they go into consumption.

Scotch whiskies fall naturally into four territorial categories. Of these, the principal is Highland malt Whisky, produced in a wide area of the mainland, lying north of an imaginary line drawn through

Dundee on the east to Greenock on the west. Islays are produced in the island of that name, Campbeltowns at the town of Campbeltown in the Mull of Kintyre, and Lowland malts south of the Dundee-Greenock line. These are all produced in pot-stills and are generally termed malt whiskies, being made from malted barley only. Though made by practically the same process, each has its own distinguishing characteristics.

Grain Whisky is also largely made in Scotland by means of the Coffey still,¹ which was patented about a century ago and differs from the pot-still in that it is continuous rather than intermittent in its operation. Moreover, besides malted barley, unmalted grain is used, such as barley, oats, rye and even other things.

Originally, distilling in the Highlands was carried on as a side-line to farming, but as the fame of the best whiskies spread, the demand for them grew until the farm gave way to the distillery. So long as the main consumption was in Scotland these distilleries were still on a very modest scale, but as the taste for Whisky spread throughout the earth a corresponding enlargement of the producing plant was required and the modern distillery came into being, with its advanced methods of manufacture and its labour-saving machinery.

Pure air and a suitable temperature, crystal spring and burn water, the finest barley and fragrant peat fire combine to ensure the production of the true *aqua vitæ*, and it is to secure these, and not

¹ Described in Chapter XXIV.

for any romantic association, that so many famous distilleries have been built amid surroundings of unsurpassed grandeur and beauty, in regions extolled in song and story. Of these factors, probably the pure, soft water is the most important, and an abundance of it has determined the locality of many a well-known distillery. Again, the barley grown in the northern counties of Scotland is as good as the famous barley of the Lothians, and practically the whole crop is used for distilling.

Malting is begun by soaking the barley in pure cold water long enough to soften it thoroughly. From the "steeps" it is carried to the malting floors to germinate. Here the grain is turned repeatedly with wooden shovels in an appropriate temperature, until, in from twelve to fourteen days, germination has proceeded far enough, when the green malt, as it is then termed, is ready for drying.

The kiln floor is made of wire mesh, in order that the whole heat and smoke from the peat fire below may pass up through the malting barley, and give the whisky its characteristic Highland flavour. In three or four days the malt is thoroughly dry; then it is stored in bins to mature for five or six weeks before going to the mill to be ground.

Now the ground malt or "grist" from the mill is thoroughly mixed with hot water and put into the mash tun, where a succession of waters of suitable temperature are run on to it to extract the saccharine. The infusion, now termed "worts," is drained off and cooled, a little yeast is added, and

fermentation ensues ; thus the saccharine is converted into alcohol. This takes two or three days, and then the liquid, now termed “ wash,” is ready for distillation. The spent grains or “ draff ” is sent away for cattle food.

The still-house is the most interesting part of the distillery. It generally contains two copper stills, the larger called the “ wash ” still and the smaller the “ spirit ” still. Both of course are pot stills, a name given to them because of their shape, which has remained practically unchanged for centuries, and also because they are directly heated over a coal fire. The wash is boiled in the larger still and the spirit comes off in vapour, which is condensed by passing through many copper pipes under cold water.

This spirit, curiously called “ low wines,” being neither pure enough nor strong enough for use as Whisky, is redistilled in the smaller or “ spirit ” still. The finest part of this second distillation is the Whisky of commerce. The latter part of the run, known as “ feints,” is kept over for mixing with the “ low wines ” from the “ wash ” still at the next distillation.

Needless to say, the supervision of the Excise authorities is as complete and ingenious as long years of experience can make it. In the later stages of manufacture, all cocks, valves and openings to vessels are secured by Inland Revenue locks, and as soon as the casks are filled they are removed to the bonded warehouses, which are a prominent feature at all distilleries.

There are about 120 pot-still distilleries in Scot-

land. In addition, there are a dozen distilleries which produce a vast deal of "patent" spirit. By this process, as I have said, distilling is not interrupted for the removal of the spent material and the recharging of the still; the consequent saving of time and labour, combined with the relative cheapness of the ingredients and a considerably earlier maturity, makes the "patent" spirit very much less costly than the "pot-still."

In the early days, Whisky went into consumption as it left the still, the only modification being the addition of a little water, perhaps. As the market broadened, the merchants stepped in, to relieve the producers of the intricate business of distribution, and speedily discovered that what was acceptable to the braw Highlander did not necessarily suit the city dweller in another clime.

It was found that by ageing under suitable conditions substantial changes took place which greatly enhanced palatability. Also, by combining the distinguishing characteristics of the whiskies in mixtures or blends, a much wider range of qualities and flavours was attainable. A perfect blend has been the ideal and unending preoccupation of blenders ever since.

Blending has not only been reduced to an exact science, but developed into an elaborate and lengthy process, calling for expert guidance and meticulous care from beginning to end. Although the process is by no means the same in every case, the necessity for uniformity is always paramount, because a man who has found a Whisky that he likes wants more of the same sort.

The blender must, first and foremost, possess an intimate acquaintance with the characteristics of the individual whiskies which he proposes to use ; as many as thirty or more may go to the making of a single blend. Those characteristics are determined, among other things, by the kind of barley, the quantity of peat used in the malting, the quality of the water, the manner of distillation and the shape and size of the stills ; they may be materially accentuated or modified by the manner in which the spirit is matured.

Naturally enough, successful blenders jealously guard the secrets of their own particular methods. In general, it may be said that the chief feature in present-day practice is vatting—that is to say, mixing together in a huge vat or tun all the whiskies, each the product of a different distillery, which are to be used in the blend. The result is the Whisky as it is sold to the consumer.

Brands may differ as much in style, flavour and bouquet as did the individual whiskies which are their constituents, yet they will all be found to have attained the primary desideratum that no single constituent “ comes through ” or is markedly apparent. Substantial stocks of matured and maturing whiskies are available for the Scottish blenders to draw upon ; the bonded warehouses now hold over a hundred million proof gallons.

WHISKY DUTIES : 1840 TO 1920

The following table shows the extraordinary increase in the duty on British spirits since 1840 :

| | Additions. | Amount of Duty. | Chancellors. |
|---------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| | <i>s. d.</i> | <i>s. d.</i> | |
| May 1, 1840 | — | 3 4 | — |
| May 15, 1840 | 0 4 | 3 8 | Baring |
| Apl. 21, 1853 | 1 0 | 4 8 | Gladstone |
| Mar. 8, 1854 | 1 0 | 5 8 | " |
| May 26, 1854 | 0 4 | 6 0 | " |
| Apl. 20, 1855 | 1 10 | 7 10 | Lewis |
| Oct. 1, 1855 | 0 2 | 8 0 | " |
| Feb. 29, 1856 | 0 1 | 8 1 | " |
| July 17, 1860 | 1 11 | 10 0 | Gladstone |
| May 1, 1885 | 2 0 | 12 0 | Childers |
| June 9, 1885 | 1s. taken off | 11 0 | Hicks Beach |
| June 10, 1885 | 1s. taken off | 10 0 | " |
| April, 1890 | Added 6d. | 10 6 | Goschen |
| Apl. 17, 1894 | Added 6d. | 11 0 | Harcourt |
| July 1, 1895 | 6d. taken off | 10 6 | Hicks Beach |
| Mar. 5, 1900 | Added 6d. | 11 0 | " |
| Apl. 29, 1909 | Added 3s. 9d. | 14 9 | Lloyd George |
| Apl. 22, 1918 | Added 15s. 3s. | 30 0 | Bonar Law |
| Apl. 30, 1919 | Added 20s. | 50 0 | A. Chamberlain |
| Apl. 19, 1920 | Added 22s. 6d. | 72 6 | " |

THE LEGEND OF ATHOLE BROSE

About three centuries ago the lands and honours of Tullibardine happened to centre in a beautiful female. This young and coroneted maid of the Tay was fond of perambulating the romantic forests which then fringed the rivers from Dunkeld to Blair in Atholl.

The forests were infested by a gigantic wild man, who would dart upon strollers and destroy them, or rob unguarded people of whatever fruits or viands they might be carrying with them. Sometimes this half-naked savage of the woods crossed the path of the heiress of Tullibardine, and at last she pledged her hand and a portion of land to any unmarried man who should kill him or fetter him.

Several attempted it, but were either felled by the wild man or compelled to fly from him. Then the young lady's particular desire, a handsome and agile young yeoman, attempted and prevailed, and the plan which succeeded was this.

At a spot in the forest, concealed among a dense grove of oaks, was a hollow stone, which received the water of a cool spring. Every day at a certain hour the satyr of Atholl was observed to repair to the stone basin to quench his thirst. Accordingly, the young Highlander set to work one day and turned aside the rill which fed the basin, thus emptying it of all its contents. He then filled it with honey and a liquor like the present Highland Whisky, admitting just a little water the better to conceal the potion. His work done, he climbed a tree, whence unobserved he could watch the working of his stratagem.

At the wonted hour the savage of the forest arrived and, falling flat on his belly, began to drink. Enticed by the palatable mixture, he drained it to the bottom. The hydromel soon took effect ; he became intoxicated and fell into slumber and stupidity. Then the wary yeoman descended from his tree, bound the satyr with fetters with which he had previously provided himself, and calling for help carried him before his fair employer and modestly demanded his wages.

The demand was soon accorded ; the beautiful heiress of Tullibardine gave her hand and her lands to the humble but accomplished yeoman, for whom indeed she had sighed in secret. Whether it was she herself who devised the stratagem we are not told.

Thenceforth, however, that particular mixture of honey and spirits was called "Athole Brose" and the fettering of the savage suggested the armorial bearings and motto which for centuries have belonged to the ducal family of Atholl. Indeed, the figure of a naked man standing in fetters, and the peculiar and appropriate motto: "Furth and fill the fetters," is held in Atholl to leave little doubt about the correctness of this Highland tradition.

Tradition also has it that Murray of Tullibardine, who accepted Bothwell's challenge to single combat, but was forbidden by Mary Queen of Scots, was the son or grandson of the champion who fettered the wild man.

In the days of Queen Anne, Murray of Tullibardine became Duke of Atholl and sovereign of the Isle of Man. Thus the mountainous and romantic country from Blair to Inver and the Mona, for which in olden time even Scandinavia's kings contested, became the hereditary domain of the descendants of a simple yeoman—a gallant and intrepid stock to this day. And all owing, in a manner of speaking, to Highland Whisky. Hech!

CHAPTER XXIII

THE STORY OF IRISH WHISKEY

Good cereals and suitable water are the first essentials for the making of good Whiskey. Ireland is happy in the possession of both in abundance. The Dublin water, which produces the famous Dublin stout, is equally favourable for the production of Irish Whiskey. Its virtue lies in its special power of dissolving vegetable matters and retaining vegetable aromas.

In Dublin or Bushmills, as in the Scottish glens, Burton-on-Trent or Southwark by the Thames, the renown of the distiller and the brewer is built primarily upon water. Dublin is twice blessed in that her water suits both.

The curious experiment has been made of bringing Dublin water to London and making with it a pot of tea similar in all other respects to one made with ordinary London water. It is said that the former yielded at once a more fully flavoured and deeply coloured infusion, thus demonstrating the superior extractive power of Dublin water over that of London.

The natural fertility of the Irish soil, or a great portion of it, aided by a humid and equable climate, is favourable to the cultivation of barley and other cereals required by the distiller. The quality of Irish barley has improved wonderfully of late

years, thanks to the Irish distillers and maltsters, who have spared neither money nor pains in instructing the Irish farmer in the method of producing the best barley suitable for high-class Whiskey distilling. The benefit to the farmer is incalculable, for he now finds a good market accessible to him in almost every barley-growing district, or at the local mill-house and distillery, while the distiller has the advantage of the home-grown product which he desires.

Distillation is known to have been commonly practised in Ireland as early as the twelfth century. The drink was called *usquebaugh*,¹ which has become "whiskey" in English. Even before the reign of Elizabeth, the Irish distilling trade had assumed considerable proportions, and restrictions had at various times been imposed upon the manufacture and sale of spirits. The heavy penalty imposed upon domestic distilling in 1556, the nobility being excepted, created illicit distillation—illicit then, perhaps, for the first time. The penalty of death was afterwards enforced against illicit distillers. By the end of the sixteenth century, however, many licensed distillers existed and monopolies were granted to individuals in each district.

The *potheen* of Irish song and story is the home-made product which has paid no duty; when drunk new, as it often is, it is a ferocious liquor.

Between wine and Whiskey there is a close parallelism in this respect, that with both the new liquid is comparatively unpleasant, whilst with both it contains materials which shape themselves,

¹ See the preceding chapter.

if opportunity be afforded, into fresh and highly desirable compounds.

True Whiskey—that is to say, pure Whiskey—contains when it is new either fusel oil or some analogous compound, and it is not acceptable as a drink until these substances have been broken up and rearranged by spontaneous chemical action between them and the spirit with which they are in contact. Yet it is the presence of these compounds which makes Whiskey what it is, and the spirit which does not contain them when it is new is not good for anything either then or at any future time.

“Patent” or “silent” spirit is flavourless and negative, except in strength, though it is extensively used for blending purposes, to cheapen the old pot-still Whiskey.

The old-fashioned, but still popular, pot-still consists of a huge copper vessel in which the liquor is boiled, either over fire or steam. From thence it proceeds in the form of vapour into the worm or coil of tubing lying in cold water, where the vapour is condensed into spirit. The spirit is not yet perfect, however, and comes back two or three times into the pot-still, to be redistilled until it becomes perfectly clean spirit or Whiskey. “Patent” spirit, on the other hand, runs but once from the still, at a strength of “proof” to 65 or 70 overproof.

The finest Dublin pot-still Whiskey is reduced to 25 overproof, then stored in large casks or wooden vats. After seven years in wood it arrives at perfection; it can then be bottled and preserved

for an indefinite time without further change. When a bottle of such Whiskey is opened, it fills the room with its fragrance and bouquet, as does fine old Burgundy.

In the days of our forefathers, when it was customary to drink what were called "sentiments," one of the most popular was the hope "that the evening's pleasure may bear the morning's reflection." It is a characteristic of genuine and mature Dublin Whiskey that it will bear this crucial test.

The carefully brewed glass of toddy, which enlivens talk and quickens fancy when friends are met together round the fireside, leaves no manner of sting behind. It conduces to quiet and dreamless slumber, and it allows the sleeper to wake refreshed, with a cool palate and an easy head, fit for the duties or the pleasures of the coming day.

A tale is told of a wine merchant of great experience whose opinion was asked about one of the vintages which graced the board. He replied, "I will tell you all I think about it in the morning." For the unskilled in spirits there is no better test than this.

Connoisseurs may appraise with a near approach to certainty, by taste and odour, the qualities of a real or pretended Whiskey, especially after dilution with cold water. But for those who are not connoisseurs the best test is the state of the head and mouth next morning—that is, when the spirit has been taken overnight. I mean, of course, when it has been taken in moderation, for alcoholic excess, however good the alcohol, is always and to everyone injurious, if not at once, at least ultimately.

The experience of sportsmen proves Whiskey to be the best stimulant to take during long periods of exertion, when exposed to wet and cold while deer-stalking, shooting, fishing, hunting or other forms of sport, or in pedestrian excursions.

There is a story of a banquet, following upon some civic occasion, at which the then Lord Mayor of Dublin was entertained by the Lord Mayor of London. After the repast Dublin, addressing London, said :

“What wonderful wines you give your guests!”

“The best in the world!” replied London proudly.

“I noticed, however, that you yourself kept to one vintage. Was that something specially old?”

“It was!” whispered London. “Our wines are superb, but I and my left big toe prefer old Irish Whiskey to the finest product of the grape!”

Old Holinshed in his *Chronicles* (A.D. 1577), develops in more elaborate and quainter language a somewhat similar theme. The passage, which occurs in what he calls “A Plaine and perfect Description of Ireland,” describes the astonishing virtues of the Irish *aqua vitæ*, and is so amusing that I may be forgiven for quoting it here :

“The Soile is low and waterish including diverse little Ilands, invironed with lakes and marrish. Highest hills have standing pooles in their tops. Inhabitants especiallie new come are subject to distillations, rheumes and fluxes. For remedie whereof they use an ordinary drinke of Aqua Vitæ, being so qualified in the making that it drieth more and also inflameth lesse than other hot confections doo.

“One Theoricus wrote a proper treatise of Aqua Vitæ, wherein he praiseth it into the ninth degree. He distinguisheth

three sorts thereof, simplex, composita, and Perfectissima. He declareth the simples and ingrediences thereunto belonging. He wisheth it to be taken as well before meat as after. It drieth up the breaking out of hands and killeth the flesh wormes, if you wash your hands therewith.

“It scowreth all scurfe and scalds from the head, being therewith daillie washt before meales. Being moderallie taken (saith he) it sloweth age, it strengtheneth youth, it helpeth digestion, it cutteth flegme, it abandoneth melancholie, it relisheth the heart, it lighteneth the mind, it quickeneth the spirits, it cureth the hydropsie, it healeth the Strangurie, it pounceth the stone, it expelleth gravell, it puffeth awaie all ventositie, it keepeth and preserveth the head from whirling, the eies from dazeling, the toong from lipping, the mouth from maffling, the teeth from chattering, and the throte from ratling ; it keepeth the weasan from stifling, the stomach from wambling, and the heart from swelling, the bellie from wirtching, the guts from numbling, the hands from shivering, the sinewes from shrinking, the veines from srumpling, the bones from aking and the marrow from soaking. Ulstadius also ascribeth thereto a singular praise and would have it to burne being kindled which he taketh to be a token to know the goodnesse thereof. And trulie it is a soverigne liquor if it be orderlie taken.”

A “soverigne” liquor, indeed, to call for the use of such an amazing vocabulary in the description of its powers.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE WEST INDIES: RUM AND BACARDI

EVER since the palmy days of the Spanish Main the West Indies have always attracted adventurers from the Old World. And although buccaneer and treasure hunter have passed away, and the voyage is made to-day in ease and comfort aboard the splendid liners of the Royal Mail, the lure of these tropic isles persists.

The first time I made the voyage was as a youth of twenty-one, after reading *Westward Ho!* The iron-built Royal Mail steamer *Tasmanian* (2,445 tons) carried sails, and used them whenever the wind permitted. There was no steam steering-gear; two sailors worked the wheel from the bridge, and the rudder chains were generally very noisy and rattled on the deck. Anchors were hoisted with a "Yo, heave, ho! Round the capstan go!"

There was no electric light and no cold storage. Oil and candles were used in the cabins, and we carried a small farmyard all alive for fresh food—sheep, lambs, chickens, ducks, in fact a regular menagerie. All the cabins opened into the dining saloon and first class was aft instead of amidships. The only band was got up by the stewards, and the passengers amused themselves by playing the piano and singing. Under steam and sail, we made the voyage from Southampton to Barbados in thirteen days.

My last visit to Cuba, "The Pearl of the Antilles," was made half a century later, in 1923, in the perfect comfort of a modern British liner. But, much as I enjoyed it, I sometimes found myself sighing for "that first fine careless rapture" of thrumming rigging, clanking chains and clucking hens!

The principal islands belonging to the Empire are the Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad, Grenada, St. Vincent, Antigua, St. Kitts, Montserrat, Dominica, Tobago, St. Lucia and the Virgin Islands. "Where are the Virgin Islands?" asked an untravelled Member during a debate in the House of Commons one day. "I can only say that they are a long way from the Isle of Man!" was the bland reply.

British Guiana is the only British Possession left on the continent of South America, although once upon a time Buenos Ayres, the capital of the Argentine, was taken by the English Fleet and Army and held for a few months. That was in 1806.

Many years ago, when I first visited Demerara, the country was very primitive and the native Indians most untrammelled in their dress. The men mostly went like Adam before the Fall, and the women wore a few beads. Before coming into the town, however, they were obliged to change into more conventional and no doubt very uncomfortable attire. Another awkward thing was the caymans, a species of alligator, which roamed about the irrigation canals where the sugar cane was growing. For several miles out, as one approaches the Demerara river, the colour of the sea is like pea-soup, owing

THE WEST INDIES : RUM AND BACARDI 169
to the alluvial deposit brought down from the upper reaches.

The sugar cane was introduced into the West Indies in 1493, during the second voyage of Columbus, and to-day the greatest industry in most of the West Indies, British Guiana included, is sugar and the Rum which is derived from it. Tobacco and cigars are also a staple product.

The word "rum" is said to be derived from *saccharum*, the Latin word for sugar. About the middle of the seventeenth century it was called in Barbados "rumbullion," a Devonshire term for a rumfus or uproar, owing, I suppose, to its results when used immoderately. Another familiar style for it was "kill-devil," as an old West Indian work tells us in the forceful phrasing of the period : "The chiefe fudling they make in the island is Rumbullion, alias, kill-devil, and this is made of suggar-cannes distilled, a hott, hellish, and terrible liquor."

The sailors turned the word into "rumbowling" (grog), and Smollett, in *Peregrine Pickle*, gives us the abbreviated "rumbo."

Rum is defined as "spirit distilled direct from sugar-products in sugar-cane growing countries," and this definition was accepted by the Royal Commission on Whisky and other Potable Spirits, in 1909.

The method of manufacture is roughly this. The skimmings of the sugar-pans, the "washings," and especially molasses, are mixed with water and a little sulphuric acid, to assist the growth of the ferments and develop flavour; also, in British

Guiana, with a little ammonium sulphate, to produce a quick, clean fermentation. This "wash," as it is then called, is allowed to stand in large wooden vats, where it ferments. In British Guiana the process requires about two days, in Jamaica a week and upwards.

When fermentation ceases and the wash has settled, it is transferred to the still, preferably made of copper, and heated by fire. The spirit is boiled off, rectified in a vessel containing vertical tubes surrounded with water, and finally condensed in a spiral tube cooled with running water. Skimmings distilled in small stills make the best rum.

Sometimes a Coffey or "patent" still is used. This is a vertical still consisting of two tall columns. The first column contains an arrangement of alternate shelves, so that the wash, introduced at the top, drops from shelf to shelf until it reaches the bottom. On its way down it meets a current of steam, and the resultant vapour passes to the bottom of the second column, where it is rectified by the cold wash moving through it in tubes. It is condensed in the upper part of the column, whence the hot spirit flows off to the cooler. Meanwhile, the waste liquor runs away at the bottom of the first column. The process is continuous and economical, but the flavour of the spirit is not so good as when made in the old-fashioned way.

Rum is colourless as it comes from the still, but before shipment it is coloured with burnt sugar or molasses to meet the market requirements.

The finest Rum in the world is produced in Jamaica, Demerara and Santiago (Cuba). Its

dietetic value, especially when mixed with milk, is too well known to need encomium here. The average annual export of Rum from Jamaica is 1,300,000 gallons; from the other West India Islands, 200,000 gallons; and from British Guiana, 2,500,000 gallons. But owing to the reduced demand caused by the high spirit duties in the United Kingdom production has lately been restricted.

RON BACARDI

The spirit called Ron Bacardi was first distilled in Cuba in the year 1838. It is made from the sugar cane, and may be described as a refined form of Rum. The special method of distillation employed by the old house of Bacardi, whose name it bears, results in the preservation of the true natural taste of the sugar cane, while eliminating the strong taste and odour of ordinary Rum. Consequently, palates which cannot tolerate the latter find an agreeable alternative in Bacardi.

Bacardi has a great vogue in North and South America and the West Indies as a basis for a wholesome cocktail, and is now becoming known in all parts of the world. Rum has always been considered the most wholesome of spirits, probably because of its easy assimilation. From this point of view, especially in the refined form of Bacardi, it is preferable to distillations from grain.

A small wine-glass of Bacardi, before or after meals, produces a gentle heat in the stomach, helps respiration and fortifies the organic functions. With the juice of a fresh lime it makes a most pleasant, stimulating and wholesome appetiser.

Bacardi is also taken with plain or mineral water, like other spirits, and it makes an excellent "hot grog." It has been found useful as a preventative of influenza.

When Alfonso XIII, King of Spain, was in a dangerous state of weakness in consequence of an attack of grippe in the year 1889, alcoholic stimulant was prescribed. The Spanish physicians made careful investigation among the well-known brands of Rum, Brandy and other spirits, and finally selected Bacardi, on account of its purity.

CHAPTER XXV

ENGLISH ALE, CYDER AND PERRY, GIN

When as the Chilehe Rocko blowes
And Winter tells a heavy tale ;
When Pyes and Dawes and Rookes and Crowes
Sit cursing of the frosts and snowes ;
Then give me Ale . . .
Ha ! Ha ! give me Ale !—*Old Song.*

Good ale is meat, drink, and cloth.—*Old English Proverb.*

I have fed purely upon ale.—*The Beaux' Stratagem* (GEORGE FARQUHAR, 1707).

He is not deserving of the name of Englishman who speaketh against ale, that is, good ale.—*Lavengro* (GEORGE BORROW, 1851).

BEER is the national drink of England and of many countries of the world. The happiness and benefit which the sons of man have derived from beer throughout the ages is incalculable. Its manufacture is of high antiquity.

Beer was brewed from barley by the Egyptians as early as 3000 B.C. Herodotus ascribes the invention of brewing barley wine to the goddess Isis. Xenophon refers to the use of beer in Armenia in 401 B.C. Pliny mentions an intoxicating liquor made of corn and water as being in common use among the peoples of Western Europe, including the Gauls. In the kraals of Kenya and Tanganyika I have seen the natives making beer from millet. In South America the Indians make it from maize.

In London, in 1603, the Vintners' Company

allowed no one to sell less than one full quart of the best beer or ale for 1*d.* and two quarts of the smaller sort for 1*d.* And yet they say that civilisation has advanced!

Ale is manufactured from pale malt, and has a light colour; porter and stout from malt which is more highly dried.

The terms "ale" and "beer" are somewhat vaguely employed. In common London usage "beer" is now a general term embracing all malt beverages, whether brown or black, though in the technical parlance of the brewer it still means black beer only. The expression "small beer," meaning weak beer, has fallen out of the vocabulary for practical purposes, but is still useful in a figurative sense, as signifying something petty.

Thus, in the phrase "drink beer, think beer," the word "beer" is short for "small beer"—poor, thin stuff, better than mere water no doubt, but quite incapable of inspiring the vigorous, energetic, soaring thoughts which spring up in a brain nourished and stimulated by ale of good substance and alcoholic strength. A similar process of word degradation is found in the London workman's use of "ale," as short for "mild ale," the weakest and cheapest of the brown beers, though highly coloured and of sweetish body. Yet ale, as we know, is a drink of ancient renown.

"Pale ale," colloquially known as "Bitter," is, or should be, a light ale of good quality well sharpened with hops; good bitter ale should exhale a delicious waft of the oast-house as one's nose enters the tankard. Pale ales, being made from

slightly dried malt, are usually brewed stronger than the old-fashioned "brown ale," which draws colour from a hard dried or roasted malt. "Burton" is used as a generic term for the dark, strong English ales containing a high percentage of malt extractives, which the celebrated water of Burton-on-Trent is specially suited to absorb. The famous "October brew" is made of the year's fresh produce of barley and hops; it comes forward for drinking about March of the following year.

"Porter" is said to take its name from the London porters who plied their laborious trade in the days when the streets were still narrow and rough, and vehicular transport undeveloped; no doubt they found more stay in it than in the mild brown beer. Porter and "Cooper"—a rather stronger form—have largely given way, at least in name, to "Stout," the strongest of the black beers in common use.

Some very good strong ales are produced in the Lowlands of Scotland, and Dublin stout is famous all the world over. The best ale is brewed from barley malt, hops and water, and from nothing else. Early English ales contained no hops, which were only introduced from Flanders in the time of Henry VIII; the old-time folk sharpened their ale with a "toast" or a roasted crab-apple.

Just as wine, the fermented juice of the grape, is a food, so beer, the fermented infusion of barley, is likewise a food. It contains indeed the very essence of the barley in beverage form. The purpose of malting¹ is simply to prepare the barley

¹ The process is described in Chapter XXII.

for rendering up its precious extractives ; robbed of these, the residual grains are only fit for cattle. Beer, the infusion of barley, stands in much the same relationship to Whisky, the distillate of barley, as wine does to Brandy ; hence the expression “ grape on grape, corn on corn,” meaning that it is better to drink Brandy after wine, and Whisky or Gin after beer.

The food value of good beer has been known and appreciated by beer drinkers for centuries past :

I can not eate but lytle meate,
my stomacke is not good ;
But sure I thinke that I can drynke
with him that weares a hood.
Thoughe I go bare, take ye no care,
I am nothinge a-colde,
I stuffe my skyn so full within
of joly good ale and olde.

To-day, as ever, good and cheap beer is a necessity for the labouring men of this country, if they are to maintain themselves continuously and cheerfully in efficient working condition, even as wine is a necessity in wine countries.

CYDER AND PERRY

Cyder, sometimes spelt cider, is the fermented juice of apples. The name is ancient and curious, because, according to the etymologists, it comes down to us from the Hebrew word *shekar*, meaning “ strong drink ” (*shakar*, “ to be intoxicated ”). And indeed, if rumour lies not, the stalwart West Countryman’s enthusiasm for his traditional pota-

tion sometimes results in a practical verification of the derivation.

Soil and climate count for much with the cyder apple, as with the grape vine. The best English cyders are grown in the counties of Hereford and Devon, Somerset, Worcester and Gloucester in the west, and Norfolk in the east. Across the Channel, Normandy produces fine cyders, and also an apple brandy or applejack known as Calvados, which is held in great esteem by connoisseurs. Five thousand varieties of cyder apples are reputedly grown in Normandy, where the making of cyder has been practised for many centuries.

In England cyder was known in the time of Edward I (thirteenth century), and in the time of Charles II (seventeenth century) enormous quantities were made and drunk. In mid-Victorian days cyder was a popular drink in London; many cyder-houses or cellars existed for the sale of cyder and perry alone. The old music-hall song, "Sucking Cyder through a Straw," couched in the language of the people, throws an accurate light on the customs of the period.

Of late years there has been a marked revival in the use of bottled cyder, largely owing to notable improvements in its manufacture. At Hereford the method of inducing a second fermentation, as practised in Champagne, has been successfully developed, and several varieties of excellent vintage cyders and perrys, both dry and sweet, are now available. Well made and well fermented, cyder is an exceptionally wholesome beverage.

Perry, as its name implies, is made from the

fermented juice of pears. Fine sparkling perry is an admirable drink, which deserves to be better known; it is far better in flavour and in health-giving qualities than inferior sparkling wine.

GIN

Gin is a spirit made from barley, hops and juniper berries. It is to the practice of the juniper berries that Gin owes its power as a diuretic. Hence its value to persons suffering from any affection of the kidneys; Gin is the best spirit they can take, but only the best and purest should be used. During the sudden illness of King Edward VII in June 1902, a messenger was dispatched in haste from Buckingham Palace to my firm, by order of the Royal Physician, Sir Francis Laking, for a supply of the finest gin, which was thenceforth continually furnished for the use of His Majesty.

Gin came into use in the time of the later Stuarts. By reason of its attractive quality it speedily gained such vogue that at one time, early in the eighteenth century, when London was far smaller than it is to-day, no fewer than 7,044 houses sold Gin by retail, most of it grossly adulterated. The spirit was so cheap, and so poisonous, that a man could intoxicate himself for a penny.

A well-intentioned effort to check the abuse by the imposition of crushing licence and excise duties was unsuccessful. The Gin Act of 1736 practically prohibited the sale of Gin, but it gave rise to so much illicit trade, bred such a tribe of scoundrelly "informers," called forth so many villainous concoctions more poisonous even than the Gin itself, and

d to so much more drunkenness and disorder, that was repealed seven years later.

In course of time the quality improved; Gin became the purest and cheapest spirit you could get. Fifty years ago a farthing's worth of Gin could still be bought in Holywell Street, Strand, between the hours of 9.30 and 10.30 in the morning and 6 to 7.30 in the evening. "Half of gin and two out," meant half a quartern in one glass and two empty glasses besides, so that the liquor could be divided among three; people were really poor in those days. Nowadays, however, popular shion is more for Scotch Whisky than for Gin. Gin is much favoured as an ingredient for cocktails. When of fine quality and properly used, it is thoroughly wholesome spirit.

The word "Gin" is short for Geneva, though the spirit has not, and never has had, anything whatever to do with the Swiss city on Lake Lemman, except perhaps as a visitor there. The confusion is supposed to have arisen from the circumstance that the French name for juniper spirit, *genièvre*, was pronounceable, except as "geneever," and the phonetic appellation happening to correspond with that of the well-known city of Geneva, the spelling of the latter was adopted for trade purposes, whether in ignorance or as a concession to popular misconception. We still see the words "Hollands Geneva" on the square black bottles of Dutch gin, which tastes of the rye from which it is partially distilled.

CHAPTER XXVI

CHARTREUSE AND BÉNÉDICTINE D.O.M.

LA GRANDE CHARTREUSE, the old Carthusian monastery where the famous liqueur of that name was formerly made, but, alas ! is made no more, is perched most beautifully among the rugged mountains of Dauphiné, four thousand feet and more above the level of the sea. It stands about fourteen miles from Grenoble, at the head of a wild gorge which was practically impassable until the sixteenth century, when the Carthusians made a narrow road ; this has been widened of late years, and motor-cars can now drive right up. The gorge is the beginning of the Désert, the former domain of the convent ; both are now the property of the State.

The Chartreuse was founded by St. Bruno in 1084, at the period of our William the Conqueror. It has been burnt down several times during its long and chequered history, and the present building—generally spoken of as the convent, a term applied to all such religious houses, whether occupied by monks or nuns—only dates from 1676.

From Brandy and aromatic plants culled at the season of the year upon the slopes of this gorgeous valley, the monks of the Chartreuse distilled their matchless liqueur. The formula has always been secret and jealously guarded, shared only among a few of the older monks, and handed down from one to another by word of mouth alone. Before the

expulsion, the manufacture was conducted on a great scale, producing about 1,600,000 litres a year—more than 350,000 gallons. The rich revenues brought in by the sale of the liqueur were largely spent on charitable objects.

Twice the brothers have been despoiled of their property and driven into exile. The first time was during the French Revolution, in 1793. At the close of the Napoleonic period they returned to France (1816), and lived in peace for more than eighty years. Early in the present century, having steadfastly declined to accept indulgence from the decrees for the expulsion of the Religious Orders, they locked themselves in their mountain fortress and were evicted by force. Once again they bade a sad farewell to their ancient home, and emigrated to Farneta, near Lucca, in Italy. The distillery was transferred to Tarragona in Spain, and the liqueur made there is sold under the name of “Liqueur des Pères Chartreux.”

I was fortunate enough to revisit the Grande Chartreuse only two years before the departure. It was in the spring of 1901, in the early days of motor-cars, and I ascended the gorge with my daughter Vera in a 4½-h.p. Renault car with a De Dion engine, on the way from Paris to Monte Carlo. A curious thing happened while I was inspecting the distillery and tasting the yellow and green liqueurs. No ladies were admitted into the monastery building, but they were accommodated in a *dépendance* for women close by.

My daughter was looking out of the window into the courtyard when she saw a man come out of the

monastery, look at her car, then suddenly thrust his hand into her silk bag and take out her purse. Without staying to say good-bye to the sisters, she rushed out and rang the convent bell to ask for me, telling the monk who opened the door that a *voleur* had stolen her purse. He fetched me out, and we started the car at once and dashed off in pursuit, but the man had taken to the woods and we never caught him.

La Grande Chartreuse was indeed the last place in the world where one would expect to encounter a thief, for the monks were the most hospitable of men, giving food and drink freely to all who passed by.

To-day that pleasant hospitality is but a memory of the country-side. The place has been stripped of its furniture and fittings and scheduled as a "national monument." There is a museum, but the library of rare and valuable books, parchments, drawings and plans of former Carthusian days is gone, the kitchen and the refectories and the splendid distillery are lifeless and bare. The shell alone remains.

The monk's cell was really a small, storied house with two rooms on each floor. On the ground-floor were the wood-shed and the work-room, the latter provided with a carpenter's bench and a lathe. Upstairs was a kitchen and the cell proper, used as bedroom, refectory, oratory and study; the bed stood in a curtained alcove. Each building had a small enclosed garden which the occupant cultivated. The fathers never left their cells except for the daily and nightly services, and once a week to take a walk in the Désert. They took their meals

alone in their cells, except on Sundays and certain feast days, when they ate together. In the cemetery they were buried face downwards, without a coffin and without a name.

If these worthy friars were to return, the true Chartreuse liqueur could be manufactured again; when made in other countries it cannot be the same. Stocks of the genuine liqueur diminish year by year and bottles fetch a high price. The name of the printer "Alier" on the label is the only proof of authenticity.

THE ROMANCE OF BÉNÉDICTINE D.O.M.

Fécamp, where Bénédicte D.O.M. liqueur is made, is on the coast of Normandy, about 44½ miles from Dieppe. The origin of the Abbey of Fécamp is lost in the obscurity of the Dark Ages. It was about the year 1510 that a monk of the Abbey, Dom Bernardo Vincelli, a very learned man, who had devoted himself to the study of chemistry and the use of plants and herbs for the preparation of medicinal beverages, discovered an elixir which later on was named Bénédicte. This elixir was a simple cordial which the monks would take in modest quantities when tired out with work. It also enabled them to fight successfully against the malarial diseases prevalent in their neighbourhood and to succour the sick peasants and fishermen whom they visited as part of their duty.

When the Revolution broke out, the Abbey of Fécamp was swept away (1793), the monks were dispersed and the monastery ransacked and partially destroyed. Fortunately, a quantity of manu-

scripts, books and other papers were saved, and these were entrusted to the care of the *procureur fiscal* of the Abbey. Seventy years after, in 1863, the relics passed into the hands of M. Alexandre Le Grand, a descendant of the original trustee.

Searching through them, he came across the precious parchment, faded and yellow with age, which contained the recipe of Dom Vincelli's famous elixir. M. Le Grand had some knowledge of chemistry; he set to work assiduously, and after long and laborious experiments succeeded in reconstituting it. Aided by a natural delicacy of taste, he finally achieved that perfection of elegance and bouquet which characterises the Bénédictine liqueur to-day.

The present distillery buildings stand upon a portion of the vast grounds which belonged to the old Abbey. Entering the *cour d'honneur*, one might fancy oneself in a new Cluny Museum. The garden is crowded with old statues, Gothic figures, bas-reliefs and other fragments of the architecture of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; these are vestiges of the old Abbey, reverently preserved. The memory of Dom Vincelli is honoured by a statue, and also by a stained-glass window representing the learned monk in his laboratory. In another part of the building, sixteen statues of former abbots ensconced in niches in the wall gaze down upon the much changed scene. A stained-glass window represents the reception of King Francis I by the monks in 1534.

An immense hall, called the laboratory, contains the distilling apparatus, and also several gigantic

vats holding altogether 110,000 gallons of liqueur. Beneath it are the underground cellars, where the reserves of rare old brandy are stored, as well as the distillates of the various plants which enter into the composition of the liqueur.

When the bottles have been rinsed, dried and filled, the final operations of capsuling and labelling are done by about 100 girls belonging to the orphanage of the Bénédictines. Enormous piles of cases—packed, branded, marked and sealed—are stacked downstairs ready for dispatch. The permanent stock is from 15,000 to 20,000 cases. Everything is done on the spot. The wood is sawn, cut out, shaped and marked; there are also forges, braziers and lead workshops where the material for sealing the bottles is made.

The Bénédictine factory at Fécamp is a well-organised, happy place. It possesses a society for mutual assistance to which all the staff belong, a sickness and maternity fund, and a pension fund, while workmen who are incapacitated through old age or infirmity receive a regular allowance of victuals. The aged M. Le Grand is greatly venerated by his people.

The initials

D. O. M.

which are found on every bottle of Bénédictine, stand for *Deo Optimo Maximo*—"To God most good, most great." The same inscription is seen on every Roman Catholic church, generally over the entrance door.

CHAPTER XXVII

JAPAN: SAKÉ AND THE GEISHA

JAPAN is the land of cherry blossom and plum, of wistaria, iris and chrysanthemum, of Saké and the Geisha.

Saké (pronounced " sah-kay "), the national wine of Japan, is made from fermented rice and contains about 12 per cent. of alcohol. It is the drink most favoured by all classes, as *arrack* is in China and India, and it is intimately associated with the history and traditions of the people. Like many other discoveries and inventions, the brewing of Saké, as at present practised, was originally a Chinese process and was brought to Japan in the fourth century; it is claimed, however, that a cruder drink of a similar kind was made and used in Japan for many centuries before that.

The rice, or paddy, as it is called when in the husk, is sown towards the end of April or the beginning of May, and transplanted later on into the fields. This transplanting of the rice is a picturesque and characteristic scene of rural Japan.

The farmer's whole family, wearing large hats and raincoats, both made of straw, stand with their bare legs in the watery field nearly up to the knees. It is usually raining, because it is the rainy season, and they are usually singing. One of them, standing at a distance on the seed plot, draws the

half-grown rice plants from the bed, ties them in loose bundles, and tosses them to the others, who carefully but speedily dibble them in, plant by plant, at exact intervals in perfectly regular rows.

As one passes through the country at the season of the year, these ubiquitous paddy-fields of fresh young green in perfect symmetry are singularly refreshing to the eye. In early September the plants blossom, and the harvest is from late September to November. The manufacture of



TA-ŪE OR PLANTING THE RICEFIELDS.

Sketch from memory by a Japanese student at Oxford.

Saké is done in the cold months, from November to February.

First the milled rice is washed with fresh water, which is constantly renewed until it ceases to take a milky colour. Steam is then applied until the grain softens, when it is kneaded into dough between the fingers and spread out on straw mats to cool and ferment. After five or six days this process is complete and the material is ready for the brewery. There it is pressed, clarified and committed to the mash tub. Then comes the exciseman—Saké makes a big revenue for the Government.

The chief Saké breweries are in the region of Kobe, that great and growing commercial city, and it is here that the best brands, Sakura (cherry) Masamuné and Kiku (chrysanthemum) Masamuné are produced. Kobe is the starting-place for the Inland Sea, one of the chief natural features of Japan and a delightful yachting ground, with its innumerable green pine trees, white granite sands and hundreds of enchanting little islands. Fishing hamlets dot the shore, the curious Japanese *sampans* ply hither and thither, and from the margin of the sea rise the terraced paddy-fields. I do not remember a pleasanter stay anywhere than at Miyajima, not far from Kobe, on this beautiful Inland Sea.¹

The best Saké is clear and the colour of a very pale sherry. It is drunk out of tiny flat porcelain or lacquer cups, which hold no more than a mouthful. The Japanese are very fond of warm drinks and prefer to take their Saké so. Europeans generally dislike its peculiar acid taste, but the dislike may be overcome by perseverance. The effect of Saké is quickly felt, though its influence is somewhat transient.

In the traditional marriage ritual of Japan the ceremonial drinking of Saké holds a place of high importance. The bride has come, attended by her mother, to the home of the bridegroom; she is dressed in white, the colour of mourning, to signify that she has left her parents' house for ever. Her hair is arranged in the married style, low over the ears and the nape of the neck, and her face is

¹ See *Round the World*, by the Author.

heavily painted; she wears a high headdress, but no veil.

A room has been prepared for the wedding. On a little shrine stand the miniature pine, bamboo and plum—symbols of long life, adaptability and purity—with offerings to ancestors and emblems of good luck. Bride and bridegroom seat themselves on the floor, facing one another, but at a distance. Before each is placed a little, low white-wood table; on each table are three little white trays, and on each tray is a little white bowl.

In silence and solemnity an attendant maid pours Saké into the bride's cups, and she from each of three in turn takes three sips. Thus she makes her sacred pledge. In the same manner, with thrice three sips, the bridegroom pledges himself to his bride. This time-honoured rite bears the name of *san-san kudo*—"three-three nine" or, as we might say, "three times three."

A more modern and less ceremonious form is for bride and bridegroom to drink successively from the same cup, symbolising the joint and equal sharing of life's joys and sorrows. But whatever the ritual employed, Saké is indispensable to the marriage ceremony.

Historically, the Geisha girl dates from the reign of the Mikado Toba, in the eleventh century. She is famous all the world over for her singing and dancing, and she is a real artist, beginning very young and working hard at her profession. The true Geisha girl—Yoshihara Geisha—must not be confused with the professional denizen of that historic quarter of Tokyo, although she may be

hired there to play, dance and entertain at dinners, banquets and tea ceremonies.

In Japan no party is complete without the Geisha girls. They help the host and hostess by singing, dancing, conversing with the guests and looking after their wants. They fill up your bowl with Saké, help you to refreshments, dress beautifully, and in a word are indispensable to the social life of the country.

Music, dancing and singing are the professional work of the Geisha girls. Their instruments are the *samisen* or three-stringed guitar, lute, zither, flute and drum, which is shaped like an hour-glass and played with the hand—a combination of the softest sounds. Often have I lingered outside the little wooden houses of Kyoto, that world of dreams, listening to the faint, mellow, infatuating music of the girls at their practice. It is music whose temperament can only be expressed in its own surroundings in its own native land, and only there can its haunting charm be truly felt.

There are schools at Osaka for training the girls in music and dancing, reading, writing and other useful accomplishments. Born mostly of poor and simple parents, they begin at fourteen or fifteen years of age, and serve a hard apprenticeship. In the day-time they must study and in the evening they must work in the restaurants; but at eighteen or twenty they are accomplished in the national custom of playing and singing love-songs on the *samisen*, they have learned to entertain with intelligence and charm, and to write poems for their customers. They can now earn large incomes,

though their expenses are high, with beautiful dresses to pay for, hairdressing, taxes, house rent, maid-servants, tips.

The tactful capacity of the Geisha girls is shown by a story told of one who, faced with the task of entertaining three guests at the same time, sang a song for the first, served the second with Saké from a porcelain bottle held in her right hand, and leaned her left hand on the knee of the third. All were equally complimented and pleased. There is a saying that the European girl is the rose, the Japanese the chrysanthemum, and the Chinese the peony.

The life of a Geisha girl is a busy one. Before breakfast—if it is a day of festival, and there are many such—she will visit the shrine of the spirit to whom the day is sacred and worship there. Returning, she will breakfast, and afterwards take her bath at the bath-house. She must then spend half an hour perhaps combing out her long black hair and walk to the hairdresser to have it elaborately dressed. Every day, too, she must practise on the *samisen*, and very likely teach the younger girls to play as well, and she must practise her dancing to keep her body supple.

Yet all this is but preparation. Her real life is spent in a world which comes to life after the sun has gone down. In the same evening she will play and sing at many dinners, and the night is far spent before she can return to her own chamber.

In Shiba Park, Tokyo, is the Koyokan or Maple House, where one may dine in the midst of beauti-

fully laid-out gardens, with small canals running through them and little bridges over the canals; here, too, one sees the "Maple Dance" performed by young and beautiful girls. Important banquets to foreigners are given at the Koyokan. I once had the pleasure of entertaining there two Japanese friends, who spoke English fluently and acted as interpreters.

There is no furniture in Japanese houses, so we sat on cushions on the matted floors, having first taken off our shoes at the entrance and put on slippers, which are provided everywhere for foreigners. Sitting down at the end of the room, one in front of each guest, were the prettiest of little maids in Japanese costumes, with wonderful dressed hair and comb, shuffling with their little bare feet.

Each of us had a small table to himself, and the maid sitting opposite poured out the Saké in a tiny porcelain cup. The dinner was of many courses—turtle soup, chicken and rice, and morsels of I know not what, all to be captured with chopsticks and if possible conveyed to the mouth. There were also many trays of sweets.

In the morning I had hired six Geisha girls, without whom no dinner is complete—three to play the *samisen*, flute and hand drum, and three younger ones to dance. After the repast they arrived, dressed in lovely costumes of many colours. Making the neatest of bows, they quietly began their performance, singing their romantic songs of love and passion, butterflies and flowers, rivers and woods, blue sky and starry night. One felt sorry

not to be able to converse with them in their own language.

It is hard to say whether these girls are really beautiful according to European taste, because their faces are painted and artificially made up. Yet when one meets the modern tall Japanese lady at an "At Home" in London, dressed in the latest Paris creation and speaking perfect English, she looks even prettier than she does in her own national costume in her own native land.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS: KAVA

KAVA is the ancient national "wine" of Polynesia and Melanesia. In the old days in Tahiti, Marquesas, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Hawaii and hundreds of the other Pacific Islands, the natives used to make Kava in this way. Girls with sound teeth and excellent health chewed pieces of kava root—it is a sort of pepper plant—and spat them out into a bowl. In Samoa, the taupo or beauty of the village, chief's daughter and virgin of unblemished character, often mixed the Kava. Now the chips of kava root are pressed and put into a vessel, water is poured over them and they are left to ferment.

The ceremony of drinking Kava is generally held in the chief's house. The guests sit round, dressed in their bark-cloth lava-lava petticoats, but naked to the waist, their bushy black hair and beautiful copper skins shining with coco-nut oil. When all is ready, the host hands the Kava in a coco-nut shell, and it is passed round to the clapping of hands.

It was in a native house in Samoa that I tasted this liquor. It has a muddy appearance, rather like *café au lait*, or a greenish hue if made with leaves. The taste is at first sweet, then pungent and acrid. The usual dose is a couple of mouthfuls. Intoxication follows in about twenty minutes. This,

however, only happens to those who are not inured to the use of the liquor.

The drunkenness produced by Kava is of the melancholy, silent, drowsy type; it affects the limbs, causing them to become temporarily paralysed. Excessive Kava drinking is said to lead to skin and other diseases, but on the other hand many medicinal virtues are ascribed to the preparation. It is supposed to be very refreshing and wholesome in these hot climates.

In many of the islands the manufacture of Kava is now forbidden. Prohibition is enforced by the Government. The natives tell me that more crimes take place than formerly.

A century and a half ago, Captain Cook, R.N., the great discoverer, wrote in his diary under date September 1774, at Otaheite (now Tahiti), an account of Kava drinking by the islanders :

“The liquor which they make from the plant called the Ava ava, is expressed from the root. The manner of preparing this liquor is as simple as it is disgusting to a European. It is thus : several people take some of the root, and chew it till it is soft and pulpy : then they spit it out into a platter or other vessel, every one into the same : when a sufficient quantity is chewed more or less, water is put to it according as it is to be strong or weak : the juice thus diluted is strained through some fibrous stuff like fine shavings : after which it is fit for drinking, and this is always done immediately. It has a pepperish taste, drinks flat, and rather insipid. But though it is intoxicating, I saw only one instance where it had that effect : as they

generally drink it with great moderation, and but little at a time. Sometimes they chew this root in their mouths, as Europeans do tobacco, and swallow their spittle : and sometimes I have seen them eat it wholly.”

Novelists let themselves go when they write of the blue lagoons, coral reefs, fish of rainbow hue and feathery palm trees of the South Seas, to say nothing of the lovely olive-brown women with their jet-black hair, and so forth. No doubt we should be grateful to them, because, as a matter of fact, it is much better to read the flowing description than to live the real life in the islands, which is totally different. There are certainly thousands of islands, some of them mere rocks in the sea, but if you have seen one you may rest assured that all the others are very much the same. At times you feel that you never want to see another coco-nut tree again, or endure the heat and fever of the tropics, the flies and mosquitos, the black sand on the sea-shore, and the tinned food. Tahiti perhaps may be the exception ; it is really lovely. The Hawaii Islands, of course, are not South Sea Islands at all, being well north of the equator, with a splendid climate.¹

¹ In the Author's book *Round the World* is a descriptive account of travel in the Pacific and South Sea Islands.

CHAPTER XXIX

CEREMONIAL DRINKING : TOASTS AND SENTIMENTS

Wine stimulates the mind and makes it quick with heat : care flees and is dissolved in much drink.—*Ovid*.

THE custom of drinking healths is of immemorial antiquity. Various origins have been ascribed to it, but they are all conjectural, if not frankly fabulous. Among some ancient people, the first toast was “the gods,” whence it is presumed that the toast was a survival of the drink offering or libation to tutelary deities. The jovial fancy of Rabelais makes the giant Gabbara, an ancestor of Gargantua, “the first inventor of the drinking of healths.”

In drinking healths we raise the glass towards the person toasted and say “Your health !” It is recorded in classical lore that the Greeks at their banquets, when handing the cup from one to another, would speak the name, as “This to thee, Jason !” *Græci in epulis poculum alicui tradituri eum nominare solent*. Holding out the wineglass is, perhaps, a relic of this Greek custom, which was itself derived no doubt from the older civilisations of the Mediterranean.

The Romans had a curious fashion of toasting a lady by drinking a bumper to each letter of her name. As Martial sings :

Let six full cups to Nævia's health go round
And fair Tustina's be with seven crowned.

The practice still persisted in seventeenth-century England and is satirised by Hudibras, who calls it "spelling names with beer-glasses."¹

In Plautus we read of a man drinking to his mistress with the words: *Bene vos, bene nos, bene te, bene me, bene nostrum etiam Stephanium* ("Here's to you, here's to us, here's to thee, here's to me, here's to our own Stephen"). A similar verse is found in Persius: *Bene mihi, bene vobis, bene amicæ nostræ* ("Here's to me, here's to you, here's to I shan't say who"). Ovid and Horace both allude to the same custom.

The Saxons were great health drinkers and brought their custom with them to Britain. Geoffrey of Monmouth records that Hengist the Saxon (c. A.D. 450) invited Vortigern, King of the Britons, to a banquet to see his new levies. After the meats were removed, his beautiful daughter Rowena entered with a golden cup of wine and, making obeisance to Vortigern, said: "Lauerd Kinning, waes heal" (Lord King, your health!). She drank from the cup and offered it to King Vortigern, who, having inquired the meaning of the ceremony, politely replied, "Drinc heal" (Here's to you!), and drank too.

William of Malmesbury asserts that the custom of pledging became established in England in consequence of the death of young King Edward the Martyr (A.D. 978), who at the age of eighteen was traitorously stabbed in the back while drinking a cup of wine presented to him outside Corfe Castle by his mother Elfrida. From other chroniclers, however,

¹ And see p. 207.

we gather that this was by no means an isolated instance of a troublesome practice which the Danish pirates brought with them when they burst into the country during the Saxon period.

Wishing to remove an inconvenient enemy whom it might be dangerous to attack openly, they would invite him to a banquet, watch their opportunity, and strike at him while the cup was at his mouth. Hence the expression, "I pledge you"—that is to say, the drinker pledges himself for the safety of him to whom he will presently hand the cup.

And to this day, when the Loving Cup goes round at City dinners, it is customary for three men to stand up together—the one behind protecting the drinker with a dagger, as though to prevent him from being stabbed while drinking. When a man has drunk, he bows to the next man as a sign to him to take the cup, while he himself takes the dagger. So the silver jug passes on its way round the table, as in order laid down by time-honoured ritual. Some of the old silver vessels and poniards used in the City of London at the Mayoral and Livery Companies' banquets are finely designed and very highly prized.

The strict etiquette which prevailed in former time has been handed down to us by one Richard Brathwait (*ob.* 1673), thus :

He that begins the health hath his prescribed orders : first uncovering his head he takes a full cup in his hand, and setting his countenance with a grave aspect, he craves an audience : silence being once obtained, he begins to breathe out the name peradventure of some honourable personage—and he that pledges must likewise off with his cap, kisse his fingers, and bow himself in a sign of reverent acceptance.

Another old writer, using a slightly less elaborate form, lays down that the person whose health is being drunk remains perfectly still from the moment his name is uttered until the conclusion of the health.

“My lords, ladies and gentlemen—the King!” or “The Queen,” as it was when we were younger. From time out of mind the loyal toast has been drunk by all present standing, sometimes to an informal chorus of “God bless him!” and followed by the full-throated singing of the National Anthem. The after-speech, “Gentlemen, you may smoke!” is, of course, a modern accretion. I well remember the time when smoking was not allowed in the banqueting halls of the City Companies.

This greatest enemy to traditional rites, the barbarous plebeian custom of smoking when Vintage Port, Madeira and after-dinner Burgundies and Clarets are handed round the table, has been fatal to the knowledge and appreciation of the different qualities and vintages.

For now that cigars and cigarettes have taken the place of our ancestors’ old snuff-box of the last century, it has become quite impossible for many persons—smokers—to “nose” and enjoy the beautiful bouquet of these old delicate fine wines against the aroma of tobacco. Fine port vintages, Burgundies of the Clos de Vougeot, Chambertin and Romanée-Conti class, Clarets of the first growths—Château Lafite, Château Margaux, Château Haut-Brion and Château Latour—ought to be drunk in uncontaminated silence. If we *must* smoke, Sherry and Champagne are the wines most suitable for the palate.

The word "toast," used in the drinking of healths, is derived from the bit of toasted bread or biscuit which was at one time put into the tankard and which still floats in the Loving Cup at the Universities. The toast was held to improve the taste of the liquor, like the roasted crab-apple, which gave an appetising touch of sharpness to the sweet ales of olden time.

I love no rost but a nut-brown toste
and a crab layde in the fyre. . . .

By a natural transference of meaning, the word was also used to signify the drink itself. "A toast in a cold morning," we read in the old *Tatler*, "heightened by nutmeg and sweetened with sugar, has for many ages been given to our dispensers of justice before they enter upon causes, and has been of great politic use to take off the severity of their sentences, but [the writer whimsically adds] has indeed been remarkable for one ill effect, that it inclines those who use it immoderately to speak Latin, to the admiration rather than information of an Audience."

To toast a person, then, was to drink a toast to his good health. From this, again, it was an easy step to yet another meaning, namely, the person toasted. And thereby hangs a romantic, if apocryphal, story. The authority is the same *Tatler*, the period is that of the Merry Monarch, Charles II, and the place the fashionable and celebrated city of Bath :

"It happened [runs the story] that on a public day a celebrated beauty of those times was in the

Cross Bath, and one of the crowd of her admirers took a glass of the water in which the fair one stood and drank her health to the company. There was in the place a gay fellow half-fuddled, who offered to jump in and swore 'Tho' he liked not the liquor, he would have the toast. He was opposed in his resolution, yet this whim gave foundation to the present honour which is done to the lady we mention in our liquors, who has ever since been called a toast.'

The fine toasting songs which have come down to us from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries testify to the notable part which toasting played in the convivial gatherings of the period. Savile's "Here's a Health unto His Majesty" was composed in 1670, and is constantly sung to this day :

Here's a health unto His Majesty !

Chorus : With a fa la la la la la la.

Confusion to his enemies !

Chorus : With a fa la la la la la la.

And he that will not drink this health,

I wish him neither wit nor wealth,

Nor yet a rope to hang himself !

Chorus : With a fa la la la la la la la la la,

With a fa la la la la la la.

A hundred years later the custom is still in full tide, as evidenced by Richard Brinsley Sheridan's immortal toasting song, "Here's to the Maiden" (1776),¹ which pictures with the hand of genius the reckless joviality of that gallant, wine-drinking age.

¹ See the succeeding chapter.

The traditional West Country song, "The Barley Mow," starts with drinking a health out of the "jolly brown bowl," and at each chorus the size of the draught is increased until in the sixteenth and last verse we have :

We'll drink it out of the ocean, my boys,
Here's a health to the barley-mow !

The ocean, the river, the well, the pipe, the hogshead, the half-hogshead, the anker, the half-anker, the gallon, the half-gallon, the pottle, the quart, the pint, the half a pint, the quarter pint, the nipperkin, and the jolly brown bowl.

Until the last quarter of the nineteenth century means of locomotion were still elementary, life was very much more localised than it is to-day, while the modern plethora of public amusements had not come into existence. What were called convivial gatherings provided much of that relaxation of spirit which a man must have if he is not to perish of dullness. The toast flourished exceedingly and upon the toast was grafted the "sentiment."

The book of toasts and sentiments is almost a curiosity in these days ; yet a hundred years ago, or even fifty, it was indispensable. In a little book which I have before me, dated 1791 and joyously entitled, *The Toast Master, Being a Genteel Collection of Sentiments and Toasts calculated for most Polite Circles to heighten Mirth and to add fresh charms to the Chearfull Glass*, prefatory reference is made to the custom "which prevails in most societies, whether public or private, for the President to call on the company in their turn for the toast.

Individuals are frequently at a loss . . .” and so on.

Provision is forthwith made to supply the deficiency. For the domestic table sentiments of duty, respect and love are recommended, while “for those joyous societies who are stimulated by the principle of true benevolence and real esteem,” whatever that may mean in plain English, sentiments are suggested “which will do honour to the heads and hearts of the company.”

In another little volume, apparently published in the reign of William IV, we find further evidence of the vogue which toasting then enjoyed, in this startling eulogy: “Toasts are the very bees’ wing of convivial enjoyments. They rouse into lively operation all the better feelings of the heart. Like the rapid action of the electric spark they suddenly ignite the combustible elements of wit whose brilliant intellectual coruscations furnish the natural and only proper lights for the Bacchanalian board.” A toast which appears in the body of the book—“Great Britain’s Rising Star—the Princess Victoria”—places the date somewhere before 1837.

There were many books of the kind, but I will only mention one other, published as lately as 1870, in a convenient size for slipping into the pocket before repairing to the festive board. The tone of the preface has now become a trifle cynical. “It is impossible [we are told] to be always proposing the health of our friends and descanting upon their real or supposed virtues. Social gatherings require more than this. . . .” The

writer boldly affirms that toasts and sentiments are as old as the Pyramids, and he classifies them under various convenient headings, such as "Amatory," "Bacchanalian," "Gastronomic" and so forth.

If the standard of "intellectual coruscation" was not always of the highest, audiences, one imagines, were seldom lacking in that spirit of charity which wine engenders. Such well-worn favourites as the following appeared again and again :

Wine, the parent of friendship, composer of strife,
The soother of sorrow, the blessing of life.

May we never want wine nor a friend to partake of it.

May the temper of our wives be suited to those of their husbands.

Our constitutional friends, the Baron and the Sirloin.

May taxation be lessened annually.

Special toasts were also contrived for specific callings, such, for instance, as "The Tallow Chandler's toast" :

May we make light of our misfortunes, melt the fair when we press them, and make our foes wax warm in our favour.

The vogue for sentiments has passed, but there are rugged traditional toasts which one may still hear given in many a rustic gathering. For, in spite of all changes of social fashion, the toast remains, and always will—a natural gesture of good feeling and respect inspired by the kindly influence of wine. The best that I know of are these :

Here's to thee, good as 'e be !
 And here's to me, bad as I be !
 But as good as 'e be, and as bad as I be,
 I'm as good as thee, bad as I be.

Here's to thee and me and a' on us !
 May we ne'er want naught, naun on us,
 Neither thee nor me nor any on us
 A' on us—nawn on us !

Here's a health to all those that we love,
 Here's a health to all those that love us,
 Here's a health to all those that love them that love us
 That love them that love those that love us.

Here's a health to you and yours,
 Likewise to us and ours :
 And if ever you and yours
 Need help that's in our powers,
 We'll do as much for you and yours
 As you have done for us and ours.

Here's to you in water,
 I wish it was in wine ;
 You'll drink to your true love,
 And I'll drink to mine.

Here's to old Adam's crystal ale,
 Clear, sparkling and divine !
 Fair H₂O, long may you flow,
 We drink your health (in wine).

OLIVER HERFORD.

Merry met, and merry part,
 I drink to thee with all my heart.

In the great country houses of Sweden, where the old customs are still kept up, the host at intervals during dinner, or any other set repast, will call for

silence, and without rising from his chair make a little speech of welcome to his guests, concluding as likely as not with the time-honoured toast, "*Min skaal, din skaal, alla vackra flickornas skaal!*" —"My health, thy health, all the pretty girls' health!" When the company has risen from the table and returned to the drawing-room, you take the opportunity of formally thanking your host and hostess for a very good dinner, the young girls—the *vackra flickornas*—curtseying to them and to their elders. These are pretty customs handed down from the past—long may they endure!

In Stockholm, too, they have a convivial fashion of drinking a glass to every stud and waistcoat button on a man's dinner dress, starting from the top; though what the origin of that may be I cannot say.

CHAPTER XXX

DRINKING SONGS AND VERSES

Drinking will make a man quaff,
Quaffing will make a man sing,
Singing will make a man laugh,
And laughing long life doth bring,
Says old Simon the King.

TOM DURFEY (1653-1723).

THE power of song is one of the most generous and kindly of the Creator's gifts to man. Song affords a natural outlet for emotions which otherwise might congest within us, stifling and consuming our spirit as with the smoky heat of a gardener's smother. Thus we have songs of joy and songs of sorrow; songs of love, adoration, exultation, execration; songs of battle, songs of toil. Even those to whom the gift of song is not vouchsafed may be cheered, consoled and fortified by the singing of others.

Drinking songs are probably as old as fermented drink itself. In essence they are the spontaneous expression of that exaltation of heart and spirit which man in nature's wisdom is constituted to derive from alcohol. A cheerful man bursts naturally into song, and when men are sitting together at the same board, one and all cheered by wine, it is natural and necessary that their tuneful hearts should unite in a single melody. Hence the drinking song.

The Greeks and Romans composed and sang pæans to Bacchus, the god of wine, and one can

well imagine our hard-drinking Viking ancestors roaring out their pagan choruses in praise of Thor, the Thunderer, who drank up half the ocean at a draught. The Provençal troubadours and minstrels of the Middle Ages (eleventh to thirteenth centuries) set the fashion of wandering from castle to castle and court to court with their songs of love and nightingales, rose bowers, streamlets, soft wind, woods and flowered fields in May. The fashion was taken up by the wandering students.

These happy-go-lucky young vagabonds, poor in purse but rich in assurance, contrived to see the world and gratify their taste for a roving life by tramping over Europe, visiting universities, abbeys, monasteries, castles of the nobility, inns and taverns, where in return for their lodging and fare they entertained their hosts with the gossip of Europe, with scholarly talk on occasion and especially with music and song. They formed themselves into a sort of Order and in course of time collected a wide range of numbers, to suit any company where chance might cast them.

Drinking songs were an important item in the repertoire of men who must often have had to "sing for their supper," and many of these quaint compositions have come down to us. In some of them the colloquial tongue is interlined with indifferent Latin, the scholastic *lingua franca* of the period. South Germany, Bavaria and the Rhine Provinces produced many such.

From the spacious days of the Tudors, when the English tongue came into its own, right down to the present time, English literature is studded with

spirited drinking songs and snatches; doubtless many more, having done their service, have drifted into limbo. Some specimens are appended :

FROM *GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE*

(1566)

I can not eate but lytle meate,
 my stomacke is not good ;
 But sure I thinke that I can drynke
 with him that weares a hood.
 Thoughe I go bare, take ye no care,
 I am nothinge a-colde,
 I stufte my skyn so full within
 of joly good ale and olde.
 Backe and syde, go bare, go bare ;
 boothe foote and hande go colde ;
 But belly, God send the good ale inoughe,
 whether it be new or olde.

I love no rost but a nut-brown toste
 and a crab layde in the fyre ;
 A lytle breade shall do me stead,
 much breade I not desyre.
 No froste nor snow, no winde, I trow,
 can hurte me if I wolde,
 I am so wrapt and throwly lapt
 of joly good ale and olde.

SNATCHES FROM SHAKESPEARE

And let me the canakin clink, clink ;
 And let me the canakin clink :
 A soldier's a man ;
 A life's but a span ;
 Why, then, let a soldier drink.

Othello, ii. 3.

A cup of wine that's brisk and fine,
 And drink unto the leman mine ;
 And a merry heart lives long-a.

2 King Henry IV, v. 3.

COME, LANDLORD, FILL THE FLOWING BOWL

(John Fletcher, 1579-1625)

Come, landlord, fill the flowing bowl
Until it doth run over ;
Come, landlord, fill the flowing bowl
Until it doth run over ;
For to-night we'll merry, merry be,
For to-night we'll merry, merry be,
For to-night we'll merry be,
To-morrow we'll be sober.

Chorus : Wake for the fal-al-al-al-i-do,
Wake for the fal-al-al-al-i-do,
Wake for the fal-al-al-al-ay,
To-morrow is a holiday.

The man who drinketh small beer,
And goes to bed quite sober,
Fades as the leaves do fade,
That drop off in October.

The man who drinketh strong beer,
And goes to bed right mellow,
Lives as he ought to live,
And dies a jolly good fellow.

But he who drinks just what he likes,
And getteth half-seas over,
Will live until he die perhaps,
And then lie down in clover.

The man who kisses a pretty girl,
And goes and tells his mother,
Ought to have his lips cut off,
And never kiss another.

DOWN AMONG THE DEAD MEN

(1700)

Here's a health to the king and a lasting peace,
 To faction an end, to wealth increase :
 Come, let's drink it while we have breath,
 For there's no drinking after death.
 And he that will this health deny,
 Down among the dead men,
 Down among the dead men,
 Down, down, down, down,
 Down among the dead men let him lie !¹

Let charming beauty's health go round,
 In whom celestial joys are found,
 And may confusion still pursue
 The senseless woman-hating crew :
 And they that woman's health deny,
 Down among the dead men, etc.

In smiling Bacchus' joys I'll roll,
 Deny no pleasure to my soul :
 Let Bacchus' health round briskly move,
 For Bacchus is a friend to Love.
 And he that will this health deny,
 Down among the dead men, etc.

May love and wine their rites maintain,
 And their united pleasures reign :
 While Bacchus' treasures crown the board
 We'll sing the joys that both afford,
 And they that won't with us comply,
 Down among the dead men,
 Down among the dead men,
 Down, down, down, down,
 Down among the dead men let them lie !

¹ The "dead men" are the empty bottles.

CONCERNING I AND NON-I

Since Father Noah first tapp'd the vine,
And warm'd his jolly old nose,
All men to drinking do much incline,
But why, no drinker yet knows :
We drink, and we never think how.
And yet, in our drinking,
The root of deep thinking
Lies very profound,
As I will expound
To all who will drink with me now.

The poets, God knows, a jovial race,
Have ever been lauding of wine :
Of Bacchus they sing, and his rosy face,
And the draught of the beaker divine :
Yet all the fine phrases are vain.
They pour out the essence
Of brain effervescence
With rhyme and rant
And jingling cant,
But nothing at all they explain.

But I, who quaff the thoughtful well
Of Plato and old Aristotle,
And Kant and Fichte and Hegel, can tell
The wisdom that lies in the bottle :
I drink, and in drinking I know.
With glance keen and nimble
I pierce thro' the symbol,
And seize the soul
Of truth in the bowl
Behind the mere sensuous show.

Now brim your glass, and plant it well
Beneath your nose on the table,
And you will find what philosophers tell
Of I and non-I is no fable :

Now listen to wisdom, my son.
 Myself am the subject,
 This wine is the object,
 These things are two,
 But I'll prove to you
 That subject and object are one.

I take this glass in my hand, and stand
 Upon my legs, if I can,
 And look and smile benign and bland,
 And feel that I am a man :
 Now stretch all the strength of your brains.
 I drink—and the object
 Is lost in the subject,
 Making one entity
 In the identity
 Of me and the wine in my veins.

And now if Hamilton, Fraser, or Mill,
 This point can better explain,
 You may learn from them with method and skill
 To plumb the abyss of your brain ;
 But this simple faith I avow :
 The root of true thinking
 Lies in deep drinking,
 As I have shown
 In a way of my own
 To this jolly good company now.

HERE'S TO THE MAIDEN

(Sheridan, 1776)

Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen,
 Now to the widow of fifty ;
 Here's to the flaunting extravagant quean,
 And here's to the housewife that's thrifty.
 Let the toast pass, drink to the lass ;
 I warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.
Chorus : Let the toast pass, drink to the lass ;
 I warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize,
Now to the damsel with none, sir ;
Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,
And now to the nymph with but one, sir.
Let the toast pass, drink to the lass ;
I warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Here's to the maid with a bosom of snow,
Now to her that's as brown as a berry ;
Here's to the wife with a face full of woe,
And here's to the damsel that's merry.
Let the toast pass, drink to the lass ;
I warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

For let her be clumsy or let her be slim,
Young or ancient, I care not a feather ;
So fill up a bumper, nay, fill to the brim,
And e'en let us toast 'em together.
Let the toast pass, drink to the lass ;
I warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Chorus : Let the toast pass, drink to the lass ;
I warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

VIVE L'AMOUR

Let ev'ry good fellow now fill up his glass,
And drink to the health of our glorious class.

Chorus : Vive la compagnie !
Vive la compagnie !
Vive la, vive la,
Vive l'amour !
Vive la, vive la,
Vive l'amour !
Vive l'amour !
Vive l'amour !
Vive la compagnie !

Let every married man drink to his wife,
The joy of his bosom and plague of his life.

Come, fill up your glasses, I'll give you a toast,
Here's a health to our friend, our kind worthy host.

Since all with good humour you've toasted so free,
I hope it will please you to drink now with me.

STUDENTS' DRINKING SONG

(Twelfth Century)

Bibit hera, bibit herus,
Bibit miles, bibit clerus,
Bibit ille, bibit illa,
Bibit servus cum ancilla ;
Bibit velox, bibit piger,
Bibit albus, bibit niger,
Bibit constans, bibit vagus,
Bibit rudis, bibit magus.

[Drinks my lord and drinks my lady,
Drinks the soldier, drinks the padre,
Man and woman, drink they all,
Drinks the wench and drinks the thrall ;
Drinks the brisk man, drinks the slack,
Drinks the white man, drinks the black,
Drinks the fickle, drinks the true,
Drinks the sage, the rustic too.]

Carmina Burana.

WATER DRINKERS

Qui potare non potestis,
Ite procul ab his festis !
Non est hic locus modestis :
Devitantur plus quam pestis.

[Ye who cannot drink deep,
Hence from this carouse !
This is no place for moderate men :
They are more shunned than the plague.]

Carmina Burana.

AN INVITATION TO DINNER

(Tenth Century)

Jam, dulcis amica, venito,
quam sicut cor meum diligo :
Intra in cubiculum meum,
ornamentis cunctis onustum :
Ibi sunt sedilia strata
et domus velis ornata,
Floresque in domo sparguntur
herbæque fragrantæ miscentur.
Est ibi mensa apposita
universis cibis onusta :
Ibi clarum vinum abundat
et quidquid te, cara, delectat :
Ibi sonant dulces symphonix,
inflantur et altius tibix :
Ibi puer doctus et puella
pangunt tibi carmina bella :
Hic cum plectro citharam tangit,
illa melos cum lyra pangit :
Portantque ministri pateras
pinguitatis poculis plenas.

[Come now, my dear,
Whom I cherish as my heart :
Come into my chamber
All laden with divers ornaments ;
There are couches spread
And my abode is hung with curtains

And strewn with flowers
And sweet-smelling herbs
A table is set out
Laden with all manner of meats ;
There abounds the clear Wine
And all that you, darling, love.
There sound sweet symphonies
And the shrill-blown pipes ;
There a skilled boy and girl
Serenade you with delightful songs ;
He plucks the harp
And she draws music from the lyre.
The thralls bring bowls of rich Wines.]

CHAPTER XXXI

FASHION IN WINE

Drink thy wine with a merry heart.—*Ecclesiastes ix. 7.*

THERE are fashions in wine-drinking, as in other human things. The Crusaders, drifting back from the Holy Land, brought with them a taste for the rich wines of the Levant and the Isles of Greece. These Malmsey wines, as they were called, found the greatest favour in England, whither they were regularly shipped from Candia—the mediæval name for the Mediterranean island of Crete—until the seventeenth century, when the advance of the Turk drove the Venetians from the island and brought its magnificent vineyards to naught.

The lapse of the Eastern Mediterranean into wineless barbarism would have been felt even more keenly than it was, had not the wines of Spain and the Atlantic isles come into vogue during the preceding century, from Henry VIII's time onwards. Under the general name of Sack, these wines were consumed with the greatest enthusiasm in the Elizabethan age.

All Sack was good, but Sherry Sack was best of all, and Sherry held its own in public esteem for three hundred years until, towards the close of the nineteenth century, it fell suddenly from grace, no man quite knows why, except that fashion changed.

Bordeaux wines, which were abundant, cheap and largely drunk in Plantagenet times, when England still had great inherited possessions in France, suffered a long eclipse during the centuries of our estrangement, though Claret was freely drunk in friendly Scotland. It was not until the sixties of last century that we were sufficiently clear of the meshes of statecraft and fiscal expediency to return once more to the full enjoyment of these wholesome French wines.

Contrariwise, State policy brought us the benefit of Port in the reign of Queen Anne, and the fashion for the superb wine of the Douro has stood us in good stead ever since.

Time was when the grapes of Anjou supplied the finest wine in France. In the days of Louis XIV (1643-1715) the district of Angers, in the Loire country west of Touraine, was as important a wine-growing centre as the Bordelais is to-day. Dumas is emphatic in describing the Anjou of the period as "*le premier vin de France.*" Anjou, however, was presently supplanted by its neighbour Saumur, which in turn made way for the illustrious Champagne.

To-day the erstwhile wine of kings and nobles fulfils a humble but useful function as a pleasant table wine of moderate price, and a good deal of it is consumed in that way within a limited distance of its home. For while Anjou, like Touraine, comes usefully to maturity in five or six years, it is not a very good traveller.

Take a modern instance. Before the Franco-Prussian War (1870) the French wines of Alsace and

Lorraine were freely drunk in the capital of the Third Napoleon. When the frontier provinces were lost to France, their wines, responding to German processes, leaned rather to the German taste; in any case, they virtually disappeared from France for fifty years. But to-day the victorious tri-colour floats again over Metz and Strasbourg, and the wines of Alsace and Lorraine, once more predominantly French in character, occupy a prominent place on the wine lists of France, where the demand for them is ever increasing.

In Belgium, too, they have almost entirely supplanted the German wines of the Rhine and the Moselle, which were consumed in large quantities before the War. Alsace-Lorraine wines are said to convey the impression of a Rhine "body" with a Moselle "bouquet." The finest of them all is the Riesling, whose reputation stands so high that the name has been annexed by the wine-growers of South Africa and Australia—a signal, if not entirely welcome, compliment.

Looking back over old trade records, I find that the wines chiefly drunk in England during the early Victorian age were Port, Sherry, Marsala, Claret, Burgundy, Champagne, Hock, Lunel, Rivesaltes, Roussillon, Hermitage and Malaga. There was no phylloxera then—the insects which did so much damage to the vines. The majority of Ports were vintage wines several years in bottle, and servants knew how to decant them carefully through a silver funnel, with tammy or muslin.

Champagne, the wine of prosperity and revel,

enjoyed a great vogue during the latter years of the century. I once had the honour, in December 1895, of playing at a Command Concert before Her Majesty Queen Victoria, at Windsor Castle, with the Imperial Institute Orchestral Society, which I had recently founded. Next day the *Court Circular* recorded that "Refreshments were served in the Audience and Presence Chambers for the Ladies and Gentlemen of the Orchestra." The "refreshments" (so modestly termed) consisted of a gorgeous Champagne supper, with the Royal servants in powdered hair and knee-breeches standing round the table.

But what struck me particularly was the appearance of the Champagne bottles. They were naked as the day they were blown! Of the proud panoply of label and gold foil, with which custom has decked "the wine of duchesses," to stimulate anticipation and guarantee its due fulfilment, not a vestige remained; everything had been scrupulously removed. And the wine, as I happened to know, was of the famed vintage of 1884, brought across from the "Golden Valley" of Saint James's—that wondrous vault beneath the Palace where the gilded necks of the foiled champagne bottles stretched away in two high, dazzling ramparts. So repugnant was the age of advertisement to the Victorian Court!

As a matter of fact, the practice of labelling wine bottles is comparatively recent in England. The sealing-wax on the cork—and the reputation of the wine merchant—was the only assurance required or desired. In the old days a nobleman or country

gentleman would have been highly disgusted if his wine had been sent down to him disfigured with labels. The accounts of the nobility were kept in a special ledger, to which the names of commoners were not admitted. Nowadays everything is labelled and the ledgers of the wine merchant have yielded long ago to the levelling force of democracy.

In the early days of the Victorian era—that golden age of learning, eloquence, progress, manners and civilisation—advertising was scarcely known at all, even as, a century ago, the Army, Navy, Church and Bar were the only professions open to Society. Solicitors, stockbrokers and traders were barred as ineligible for Court functions or the leading London Clubs. Stores, co-operative societies and limited liability companies did not exist, and businesses were handed down from father to son or some near relative, as in the case of my own firm, which was established in the reign of Charles II and has been carried on by the members of one family during twelve consecutive reigns—259 years.

Edmund Harris, the founder, was an Oxfordshire man, who came from Charlbury to London and started business in Hungerford Street, Strand, in 1667, the year after the Great Fire. He held the reins for sixty-six years, saw five monarchs out, and lived to be 100. His surviving partner, William Hedges, another Oxfordshire man, from Wooton, was now joined (1735) by William Killingworth, the old man's nephew, and William Hedges himself presently came into the family by marrying the founder's great-granddaughter, Katherine Killing-

worth, thus becoming, I suppose, a sort of grand-child to his own junior partner. After thirty-two years together they both gave way in 1767 to the junior partner's nephew, Killingworth Hedges, who was succeeded after forty-one years by his son and partner, William Hedges. This William Hedges held command for seventy-four years, outlived his son and partner, William Killingworth Hedges, and was ultimately succeeded (1844) by his son-in-law, James Butler. He passed the business to his two sons (1882), who still survive, and have now a son-in-law in directorship with them, Lieut.-Col. Hugh Iltid Nicholl, D.S.O.

In the early Victorian age Scotch Whisky was little known in the south of Great Britain; it was supposed to be a vulgar drink, only to be consumed by brawny Scotsmen and gillies on their native moors. Brandy and seltzer was drunk in the London Clubs. Irish Whiskey preceded Scotch in public favour.

Before the War good Whisky cost from 3*s.* to 4*s.* a bottle, and Crusted Port, four years in bottle, cost from 4*s.* to 5*s.* Until the accession of King Edward the Sovereign paid no duty on wines and spirits. Queen Victoria had a special bond reserved for her use.

At the present time, though much good wine is drunk, yet for a variety of reasons, of which smoking is perhaps the chief, the art of drinking it—except among connoisseurs—is neither cultivated nor esteemed as it used to be. This is a pity. But it will pass; the charms of wine are too captivating to be neglected for long by civilised man. As an

exposition of the philosophy of wine drinking and a revelation, I am sure, to many wine-drinkers, whom I cordially greet, this quaint discourse, penned by Cyrus Redding about the middle of last century, is well worth transcribing. The style is curiously old-fashioned, but the matter is as good of its kind as any that I know.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF WINE DRINKING

“The Art of taking wine is the science of exciting agreeable conversation and eliciting brilliant thought for an idle hour between the repast and the drawing-room.

“Wine makes some men dull; such persons should on no account drink the strong branded wines of the south, but confine themselves to the light red French growths, or to the white, pregnant with carbonic gas. If these fail to promote cheerfulness; if with the light Burgundy, with Lafitte, or the ethereal sparkle of Champagne, a man continue unmoved, he may depend the innocent use of wine cannot be his.

“He may excite himself by stronger kinds, and half intoxicate himself to raise a leaven of agreeability which is altogether artificial; he may woo mirth ‘sorrowfully,’ but he will only injure his stomach and cloud his brain.

“Oftentimes do Englishmen drink themselves into taciturnity below-stairs, and, ascending to the drawing-room, sit silent and solemn as so many quakers, among the fair sex. Such are past the

stage of innocent excitement by a rational quantity of the juice of the grape. They take it because the effect is a temporary indifference, an agreeable suspense from pleasure and from pain.

"Such are not the true enjoyers of wine in its legitimate use; and they should always rise and retire with the ladies, for the effect upon them is that of a narcotic.

"The true enjoyer of wine finds it exhilarates the spirits, increases the memory and promotes cheerfulness. If he be something of a wit, it draws out his hoarded stores of good sayings and lively repartees, during the moment of relaxation from thought, at the hour when it is good 'to sit awhile.'

"The cheerful glass calls into action his better natural qualities, as with the ruby liquid he swallows 'a sunbeam of the sky.' He makes his wine secondary to his conversation, and when he finds the latter at what he thinks its keenest edge and brightest polish, he leaves the table to mingle with beauty, and exchange the wine for a sparkle of more attractive and higher character, perhaps to bask in 'the purple light of love.'

"He who would destroy good wine, by taking it when its flavour is no longer fresh to the palate, is a drunkard; he knows nothing of the refinement in animal enjoyment, which consists in taking rather less than enough.

"Always to rise from the feast with an appetite is a maxim which, however gourmands and sensualists may despise it, is the course for a rational being, as well as that which yields the richest enjoyment. By this we preserve the freshness of the first taste,

the full flavour of the first sip. As the odour of the rose deadens upon the sense after the first exhalation, so it is with wine and with all our enjoyments. Thus we learn how we may, in the truest and most refined sense, enjoy the pleasures by which the benevolence of Him who has given us the things enjoyed is best repaid by our enjoying wisely.

“Many who are of the earth, earthy, imagine, as long as they get wine into the stomach, it is no matter how the thing is done. Such persons may be styled ‘stomach-drinkers,’ and may as well attain the lodgment of the fluid in the part desired by means of a forcing pump and a tube as any other mode. The palate to them is secondary to the warmth of this general magazine of liquids and solids.

“One of true oinographical taste must feel a horror at association over wine with such persons. A refinement even in our sins is better than the grossness of the coarser natures of mankind in animal vices. How much does this tell in innocent enjoyment.

“As Chesterfield felt when his son licked the plate at table, despite all his instructions in good breeding, it may be imagined how the man of refinement feels in the company of coarse, vulgar companions over wine. One half our pleasures are relative or conventional, and therefore alloy in any mode turns them to pain.

“All delicate wines should be taken out of thin glasses. The reason why wines of this class drink better out of such glasses it is impossible to say. The greatest objection, except to the opulent, is the

ease with which such glasses are broken by servants, which renders them expensive.

“Their form may be adapted to the fancy or to the reigning fashion. To a man of taste in such matters, Romanée and Lafitte would lose half their flavour in heavy, coarse glass, though to the thick, oily wines, *de liqueur* or to sweet wines, the same rule of adaptation does not seem to apply. The glass and the specific gravity of the wine should harmonise.

“The ancients had a passion for particular wine-cups. The rich murrhine cup, out of which the emperors and patricians drank their Falernian wine, the Surrentine, the cups or vases of Saguntum in Spain, and so on. The murrhine cup was the great luxury, because it imparted a perfume to the wine drunk out of it. The modern preference of thin glasses for the first-class wines has, therefore, the merit of a species of precedent.

“If we could divide a soap bubble in a half while floating on the zephyr, we should have a perfect bowl out of which to quaff Romanée, Lafitte or Sillery. . . .

“The chief thing in the art of drinking wine is to keep within those salutary limits which mark the beneficial from the pernicious. In good society, in the present day, this line is well defined; but a man must mingle in this distempered life with every class, and the difficulty is to keep the mean in those cases where others have no regard to it.

“This is best done by studying self-respect, and the art of saying ‘NO’ when the necessity for saying ‘NO’ is strongly felt.

“The courage to do this, and that absence of all fear of being accounted singular—which it is a man’s duty to cultivate, if he wish to be thought worthy of his species—will prevent his suffering in stomach or moral character from that table-complaisance which the too pliant force upon themselves contrary to their better feelings.”

We have travelled far since those days, for better or for worse—much for the better, I think, though still something for the worse. They had a standard for themselves and they lived up to it; they believed in style. Stripped of its trappings, the old wisdom is still the best wisdom, in wine-drinking at least, which is the only province in which I philosophise.

Decanting is important, if good wine is not to be spoilt, which would be the greatest shame after so much time and care have been spent upon it by man and nature too, one might say, from the sprouting of the vine and onward. Bottles should be carried carefully from the cellar, held horizontally in the same position as when in the bin, so that any deposit which may have formed may not be disturbed. Decant if possible through a silver strainer, with tammy or thin muslin, and only at the time when the wine is to be drunk—this to preserve the aroma and the bouquet.

The decanter which is to contain the wine should be slightly tepid in winter, but the wine itself must never be heated or bouquet will be squandered. A red wine should be given time enough to reach the temperature of the dining-room; otherwise the decanters may be immersed in warm water before

use. No instrument invented for decanting wine equals a steady hand—taking care not to disturb the deposit while pouring.

Many connoisseurs say that wines should not be decanted at all, but poured out steadily from a basket, so that the bouquet may not be lost by mixing with the air. Take care, however, not to disturb the deposit by tilting backwards and forwards, or your labour will be lost and the second filling of the glasses undrinkable. I remember, when I was a youth, my grandfather, William Hedges, always reversing his glass in a finger-bowl of water, so as to keep an even temperature for the fine Ports of those days.

Connoisseurs have long understood that different wines suit different viands, or, more properly, the viands suit the wines. The French saying is :

White meat, white wine :
Red meat, red wine.

The following wines and liqueurs may be found appropriate to drink with the repast, after consulting the tastes of your guests and the menu of the day :

WINES FOR THE MENU

HORS-D'ŒUVRE

| | |
|---|--------------|
| A few drops of Sherry and Maraschino are a great improvement. | Grape-fruit. |
|---|--------------|

Vodka
Kümel (Riga)

Caviare, foie gras (Strasbourg or
Toulouse), radishes, anchovies,
sardines, shrimps, prawns, olives,
saucisson, potato salad, eggs, etc.

POTAGE

(Soup)

Milk punch
 Captain Jacques punch
 Madeira

Real turtle, bisque d'écrevisses,
 bisque d'homard, bouillabaisse.

Sherry or
 Marsala

Petite marmite, croûte-au-pot,
 bortsch, pot-au-feu, mock turtle,
 mulligatawny, vermicelli, semolina,
 rice, tapioca, sago, julienne,
 soupe à l'oseille, purée de pois
 (pea soup), tomato, etc.

POISSONS ET COQUILLAGES

(Fish and Shell-fish)

Sherry :
 Amontillado
 Oloroso or
 Amoroso

Hock
 Still Moselle

Salmon, trout, esturgeon of the
 Volga (the eggs, which are
 very abundant, are kept to make
 the caviare, much esteemed in
 Russia), soles, red mullet (the
 woodcock of the ocean), turbot,
 skate, brill, plaice, cod, mackerel,
 eels, herrings, whiting, smelts,
 gudgeon, pike, carp.

Chablis
 Sauternes
 Champagne

Moules à la marinière (mussels),
 oysters, langouste (crawfish),
 lobsters, crabs, escargots (snails),
 grenouilles (frogs).

RÔTI

(Joints)

Red Wines :
 Burgundies and Clarets

Beef, mutton, lamb.

White Wines :
 Champagne
 Sparkling Moselle

Veal, pork, jambon au madère
 (Madeira sauce), ham cooked in
 sherry.

INE AND WINE LANDS OF THE WORLD

VOLAILLE

(Poultry)

ines : Chickens, ducks, geese, pigeons,
agne turkeys, guinea-fowls.

ies

es :

Bordeaux)

u Lafite

u Margaux

u Latour

u Haut-Brion

her growths

ly :

Vougeot

ertin

ée

nes :

x :

u Yquem

her Sauternes

ly :

chet

ult

GIBIER

(Game)

Sanglier (wild boar cooked in
Champagne), chevreuil (deer or
venison), lièvre (hare), lapin
(rabbit), partridge, pheasant,
coq de bruyère (grouse), geli-
notte (hazel hen), pintade
(guinea-fowl), quail, ortolan,
grive (thrush), mauviettes
(larks), bécasse (woodcock),
bécassine (snipe), widgeon,
canard sauvage (wild duck with
Port wine sauce), teal, etc.

ENTREMETS

(Sweets)

10

Crêpes-suzette (pancakes with
Grand Marnier or Orange Cura-
çao sauce), baba au rhum,
Xmas pudding (Brandy sauce),
fruit salad with liqueur (much
esteemed by teetotallers and
buveurs d'eau).

ie

liqueurs used by
ooking

DESSERT

Old Vintage Ports :

1896 Vintage

1904 Vintage

1908 Vintage

1912 Vintage

1917 Vintage

With strawberries, tawny Port
mixed with the berries is
excellent.

Madeira

Old Brown Sherry

Fine old liqueur Brandies,
Kümel, Orange Curaçao,
Crème de Menthe

COFFEE

Bénédictine, Chartreuse
(half yellow and half green)

Champagne may be served from the “roast” onwards, or it may be drunk through the whole of dinner, without mixing with any other wine.

Chablis, Sauternes, Champagne or Stout are best to drink with oysters. Whisky is not good, because it hardens the mollusc and makes it difficult to digest.

Cocktails should be drunk as long as possible before the repast, as, owing to the many ingredients which they contain, they spoil the palate for fine wines.

Cheese or olives are best for tasting.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE WINE LANDS FROM THE AIR

HALF a century or so ago, when I first set out to visit the wine lands of the world, a journey even to the nearer vineyards of Europe was a slow and sometimes a haphazard venture.

Since then the people of our generation have witnessed the coming of the aeroplane, and in the fullness of time we shall no doubt be able, if we wish, to start from our own doorstep and without touching land or sea fly straight to the vineyard of our choice anywhere on the earth's surface.

Before the aeroplane there was the balloon. Many times in that most peaceful though most wayward of conveyances have I wandered to and fro over the wine regions of France and Germany. The reign of the non-dirigible was comparatively short, but infinitely fascinating. My old balloon logs read curiously in these days, and I print a few extracts here as a memento of a sport which is never likely to return.

It was on such a jaunt, just a quarter of a century ago, that we founded the Royal Aero Club. My daughter, who had accompanied me in the 1,000 miles tour of the Royal Automobile Club in the previous year, was driving her car to Scotland, together with her cousin, Captain Guy Oliver, R.A., then stationed at Aldershot (Colonel Guy Oliver,

killed in 1914, First Expeditionary Force), and the Hon. C. S. Rolls (killed in an aeroplane accident at Bournemouth, 1910), when an escape of petrol ignited and burnt the car.

By way of compensation for our disappointment, she suggested that we should make a balloon ascent. We undertook the adventure in the balloon "City of York," which had a capacity of 42,000 feet of gas, and made the ascent from the Crystal Palace. The Hon. C. S. Rolls came with us as a third passenger, and the balloon was under the control of the late Mr. Stanley Spencer, in his official capacity as aeronaut.

While we were in the air, drifting towards Sidcup Park, in Kent, where we came down two hours later, the author suggested that we should form an Aero Club. This was carried unanimously, and the three foundation members were Miss Vera Butler (age 20), the Hon. C. S. Rolls (age 25) and myself (age 45).

Such was the small beginning of the Royal Aero Club for heavier-than-air machines, which in due time became the god-parent of the Flying Corps, afterwards the Royal Flying Corps and now the Royal Air Force. All the early pioneers in the Army and Navy learned to fly on machines belonging to members of the Club, because the Army and Navy at this period did not own a single aeroplane. Pilot certificates were also obtained through the Club, and airmen had the use of our ground in the Isle of Sheppey in 1910.

Miss Vera Butler, who was also the first lady to gain a certificate in France to drive a motor-car,

made several free balloon ascents from Paris and London before her marriage with Captain (now Colonel) Hugh Iltid Nicholl, D.S.O.¹

FORTY-SECOND BALLOON VOYAGE

September 1904, with Count d'Oultremont, President of the Belgian Aero Club, and M. Zens, of the Aero Club of France, made an ascent from the Liège Exhibition. The balloon was "La Belgique," 50,000 feet capacity, fitted with a ballonnet belonging to the Count. We landed near the Rhine in a heavy thunderstorm, and I took the train to Coblenz, the centre of the Hock and Moselle districts, the vintage just commencing.

EIGHTY-SEVENTH BALLOON VOYAGE AND TWELFTH NIGHT ASCENT

June 1907, a memorable day, as I had the honour of being introduced to Mr. Wilbur Wright, who told me he could fly; this amazing and wonderful statement one could hardly believe. Had a repast in a small café with him and the Hon. C. S. Rolls. Afterwards went to the Parc d'Aérostation at Saint-Cloud. The balloon I took up was the "Aéro Club de France," 54,000 feet capacity, and Mr. Alan Hawley, President of the Aero Club of America, accompanied me; it was his first night ascent.

Bidding au revoir to the great inventor and to "Charlie Rolls," as his many friends called him,

¹ *Fifty Years of Travel by Land, Water and Air*, by the Author, gives a full account of the early days of the Royal Aero Club and also the Royal Automobile Club.

we rose in a calm wind, saying we should be back in Paris for breakfast. In the middle of the night a strong wind got up, and crossing the French, Belgian, Dutch and German frontiers we made a landing in the morning at Lobith on the Rhine, 460 kilometres from our starting-place. The balloon was entrained by *petite vitesse* to Paris, and I travelled up the Rhine, revisiting the vineyards of the Rhine and Moselle, and seeing some of our wine friends at Coblenz.

NINETY-SIXTH BALLOON VOYAGE AND FOURTEENTH NIGHT ASCENT

September 15th, 1907, in balloon "Britannia," Hon. C. S. Rolls owner, 78,000 feet capacity, from Brussels Centennial Gardens, with the Hon. C. S. Rolls and Captain W. Grubb, R.E. Crossed over the Champagne country near Reims and Epernay, the Cognac Brandy district and Bordeaux Wine districts.

Log by barograph and aneroid :

| Time. | Alt. | Position. Bearings and Remarks. | Temp. | Distance travelled, miles. |
|-------|-------|---|-------|----------------------------|
| p.m. | | | | |
| 5.43 | 0 | Start. Baro. 29.9 | 61° | 0 |
| 6.17 | 900 | Crossed main road Brussels-Waterloo | | 7 |
| 6.27 | 900 | Eglise en fer—church | | |
| 6.56 | — | Bousval—crossed railway | | 16½ |
| 7.45 | 3,000 | Charleroi. 3 M. to W. | 46° | |
| 8.55 | 1,300 | ½ bag—Philippeville (name from inhabitants) | | 46½ |
| 9.35 | 1,600 | Couvin (name from inhabitants) | | 55 |
| 10.5 | 1,800 | Crossed frontier of France | 48° | |
| 11.10 | 3,900 | Crossed railway | | 79 |

| Time. | Alt. | Position. Bearings and Remarks. | Temp. | Distance travelled, miles. |
|-------|--------|---|-------|----------------------------|
| a.m. | | <i>September 16th, Monday</i> | | |
| 12.7 | 4,000 | Signalled another balloon same altitude | 42° | |
| 1.30 | 1,500 | Talked inhabitants. Place given as Asfeld le Ville | | |
| 2.20 | 1,600 | Crossed railway line travelling S.W. | | |
| | | CHAMPAGNE VINEYARDS ROUND REIMS AND EPERNAY | | |
| 4.20 | 2,600 | Travelling S.W. Rising | 44° | |
| 4.30 | 5,550 | In slight cloud. Beautiful cloud effects at sunrise | 36° | |
| 4.50 | 3,500 | Falling. Estimated 4 miles west of Château Thierry | | |
| 5.15 | 800 | Course high up changed more to south In equilibrium. Crossed stream near Verdelot | 46° | |
| | | Trailing for $\frac{1}{2}$ hour | | |
| 6.15 | 5,200 | Rose above the cloud. Saw three other balloons travelling more south. Bearings 180°, 173° and 35° | | 145 |
| 6.58 | 7,600 | Crossed railway—4 miles E. of Nangis | | |
| 7.20 | 8,500 | Crossed river between Forest of Fontainebleau and Montereau. River Yonne and Seine | 55° | 190 |
| | | Travelling nearly 30 miles per hour | | |
| 7.50 | 9,400 | Crossed road, railway, River Loing, near Souppes | | |
| 8.3 | 10,000 | Crossed railway near Mignières | | |
| 8.25 | 9,900 | Two miles west of Lorris | | |
| 8.40 | 10,250 | Crossed River Loire near Orleans | | 252 |
| 9.15 | 9,500 | Crossed railway 4 miles north of Salbris—falling | | |
| 9.45 | 9,300 | Crossed railway near Mennetou-Langon. 3 miles S.E. of Romorantin | | |
| 10.13 | 9,800 | Crossed road 6 miles S. of Poitiers | | |
| 11.5 | 10,300 | Two miles west of Boudain | | |
| 11.11 | 10,100 | $\frac{1}{2}$ mile N. of Le Blanc on the R. Creuse | | 360 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| 11.43 | 8,200 | Falling—crossed railway 6 miles west of Montmorillon | | |
| 11.55 | 7,500 | Crossed River Vienne | | |
| p.m. | 7,000 | Crossed railway line 6 miles west of L'Isle Jourdain—travelling 38 miles an hour | | 398 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| 12.10 | | | | |
| 12.50 | 5,500 | Crossed Charente River | | |

| Time. | Alt. | Position. Bearings and Remarks. | Temp. | Distance travelled, miles. |
|-------|--------|--|-------|----------------------------|
| p m. | | | | |
| 1.4 | 5,000 | Over Angoulême | | 430 |
| 1.45 | | One mile west of Cognac (BRANDY DISTRICT) | | |
| 2.0 | 5,400 | Crossed River Charente and railway $\frac{1}{2}$ mile W. of Châteauneuf | | |
| 2.30 | 1,200 | $\frac{1}{2}$ mile W. of Barbezieux, near Jonzac | | |
| 2.48 | 4,700 | Baignes-St. Radegonde | | |
| 3.10 | 7,500 | Crossing the Montendre-Montlieu Road | | 479 |
| 3.25 | 10,700 | Pulled valve 4 times | | |
| 3.30 | 10,750 | Crossed St. Savin-Blaye Railway | | |
| 3.41 | 9,800 | East Bank of La Gironde | | |
| 3.43 | 9,100 | West Bank of La Gironde | | |
| 3.47 | | Crossed railway line | | |
| 3.49 | 6,900 | 10 miles west of Bordeaux between Bourg and Margaux (Author took photograph of the Tongue, River Gironde and BORDEAUX VINEYARDS) | | |
| 3.55 | 4,100 | | | |
| 4.5 | | Trailing | | |
| 5.10 | 800 | 1 mile from Audenge. Close to Bay of Biscay and Arcachon | | |
| 5.15 | 1,900 | Audenge Railway and Landes district —began throwing out everything from balloon basket, empty champagne bottles, legs of chairs and table, empty bags of ballast, etc. . | | 527 |
| 5.25 | 2,000 | Crossed the Morcenx Line | | |
| 5.40 | | Trailing over the Forest | | |
| 6.15 | 0 | Landed— $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of Sanguinet, between Biarritz and Arcachon . | | 535 |
| | | 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours' voyage in the air | | |
| | | Total distance . | | 535 |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| Weight of balloon complete | 1,100 lb. |
| „ passengers | 550 „ |
| „ maps, food and kit | 100 „ |
| „ ballast | 1,400 „ |
| Total | 3,150 „ |

From Sanguinet returned to Bordeaux and called on my friend M. Jean Calvet, who kindly assisted us in shipping the balloon and baggage by steamer back to England.

DIRIGIBLE AIRSHIP

1907, two months later, with the Hon. C. S. Rolls commemorated our century of balloon ascents in the dirigible "Ville de Paris." We were the first Englishmen to make an ascent in a dirigible balloon, not belonging to the Government, start and return to the same point. The late M. Henry Deutsch de la Meurthe had courteously placed his airship at our disposal. M. Henry Kapferer, his nephew, was the pilot, and M. Paulhan the mechanic (well-known subsequently as the winner of the *Daily Mail* £10,000 prize for an aeroplane flight from London to Manchester).

FIRST AEROPLANE FLIGHT

1908, a sensational year, by reason of the coming of the heavier-than-air machine. Mr. Wilbur Wright, inventor (with his brother Orville) of the aeroplane, brought his machine over to Le Mans in France, where, on October 8th, I had the privilege of 4½ minutes' flight with him round the artillery ground, returning to the same point. There were no pneumatic wheels on the plane but by releasing a weight which held it the machine slid down an incline on two rails and rose in the air.

After the flight I gave my impression and my prophecy in *The Sportsman* of October 13th, 1908 :

Like a bird in a cage, yes! I have flown! To look back seems like a dream, but I have seen Mr. Wilbur Wright fly for over an hour by day and by night. I have also seen sixteen passengers, including two ladies, make a flight with him. One asks what it feels like to fly: the answer is, there is no sensation whatever: it is as if man has always flown. To give

an idea, it is like gliding over sparkling water where you can see the bottom. A perfect feeling of security and stability: turning the corners and tipping the wings is like skating on the outside edge. Wright feels his levers and looks at his planes as a skipper looks at his sails to see if they are full.

The great problem of the navigation of the air which is now solved must proceed. Future battles will be fought in the air, and a new aerial force, different from the Navy and Army, will be formed. Lighthouses on land will be erected by the Trinity Board, to mark the way at night: lamps on aeroplanes or fliers will be used. With smaller planes speed will be terrific—200 miles an hour. Twenty-one miles across the Channel means a very few minutes: the winds at sea blow steadier than on land. Aeroplanes can be made to float on the water and raise themselves. No reason why, if now it can carry equal to three passengers, an aeroplane should not carry more with larger planes and engines. The North Pole, tropical forests of Central Africa, Australia and the Sahara Desert will be new fields for the explorer to glide over.

After Mr. Wilbur Wright had finished his work at Le Mans, I again motored round the country to see the vintage, which was being gathered in France. [Peace to the shade of that great, modest man !]

BY AEROPLANE OVER THE BURGUNDY WINE DISTRICTS AND THE ALPS TO LAUSANNE

May 5th, 1922, from London through the lovely gardens of Kent, aglow with pear and cherry blossom. Left the English coast at Hythe: fine spectacle of a rainbow at sea and the Channel shipping making as though to pass beneath it. In 20 minutes made the French Coast at Boulogne and, flying over Le Touquet golf-links, Abbeville, Amiens and Beauvais, reached Le Bourget Aerodrome, Paris, in $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

From Paris took the Air Service to Lausanne and crossed the Burgundy Wine districts of the Côte d'Or, with a splendid view of Mont Blanc and the Alps. The lakes of Geneva and Neuchâtel looked very small, as we had to mount up several thousand feet owing to the snow clouds. Lausanne is a bad landing place, not level, and very small.

Return journey to Paris by a more northerly course over the pine forests of the Bavarian Alps, covered with snow; the trenches at Troyes reminded one again of the Great War. The pilots were Captain Powell and M. Labouchere, and I can express great appreciation of their skill. A very rough flight, both going and returning. At Paris, changed into a de Havilland D.H.9 machine, pilot Mr. Alan J. Cobham, and crossed the Channel in $12\frac{1}{2}$ minutes by my watch. As London was in a fog and mist, we had to alight in the Romney marshes among the sheep and lambs near Lympne. The train journey takes 46 hours: the distance was covered by aeroplane in $12\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

The wines of Switzerland are mostly used for home consumption. [NOTE: *Sir* Alan now!]

AEROPLANE: MOROCCO TO TOULOUSE, PARIS TO LONDON

March 2nd, 1925. The night before we started from Casablanca there was a corona round the moon, which was a bad sign, and in Marakeesh there had been a glorious sunset over the great Atlas Mountains, which was another bad sign. The motor called for me at the hotel at 6 a.m., and on the way to the aerodrome picked up the

pilot, M. Doyen, Customs and Passport Officer, and a gendarme to see that everything was in order before I left the country. The Latecoere Company's aeroplane was of the Breguet type, for one passenger and the pilot, the rest of the space being filled up with mail bags and *aéropaquets*. It was a bright red sunrise—another bad sign for rain and wind, which really made the voyage much more interesting than if it had been calm weather.

First stop, Rabat, on the Atlantic coast, to pick up mails from Fez. Then a lovely view of the sea all the way, also small white Arab villages, marabouts, mosques and tombs of holy men. Passed over several rivers and the towns of Larache and Arzila. Had a sight of the lighthouse at Cape Spartel, and landed on a splendid sandy aerodrome outside Tangiers.

Took in more bags, some of which were slung underneath the frame of the aeroplane like bombs or the bag-ballasts carried outside a balloon. Manœuvred round Tangiers like a pigeon, to make sure the motor was perfect, then crossed the Straits of Gibraltar at Tarifa Point, getting a fine view of the ships passing up and down. The great Rock of Gibraltar, like a lion crouching, the pretty English-looking hotel at Algeciras, the bull-ring at San Roque, the English lines and neutral ground, were all familiar to me and easily recognised from the air. A gale was still blowing; many heavy black clouds, rainbows, and white horses on the rough sea.

Soon came over Andalusia, a rich country of olive trees and vines. Landed at Malaga, on the Mediterranean coast, which gives its name to the

wine, and delivered mails. Passed the Spanish *douane*, also usual passport ordeal. Then changed aeroplanes (new pilot, M. H. R. Lambert) and left for Alicante.

Scenery now very grand; snow peaks of the Sierra Nevada on our left, Mediterranean on our right. The sun came out and the sea turned bright blue. View of Cartagena, founded by Hasdrubal, and once the greatest naval arsenal in the world; the zig-zag roads and steep hills very picturesque. Still following the coast, reached Alicante; the bare castle rock stands out conspicuously; many vineyards and olive plantations in the neighbourhood.

March 3rd. Changed aeroplane and pilot again (now M. Emile Ecrivain), and steered for Barcelona. Passed over Valencia and the large wine district of Tarragona.

Darkness falling, stayed the night at Barcelona aerodrome, and started next day at 6 a.m. for Toulouse via Perpignan and Carcassonne. Over the snow-covered Pyrenees it was cold, and I put the mail bags round my legs to keep the wind and draught out. Landed at 9 a.m., Toulouse.

From Toulouse there is no air service at present; the mails go by express train to Paris.

SCHEDULED TIMES OF DEPARTURE (WINTER SERVICE)

| | | | | |
|-----------|------------|---|---|-------------------|
| MOROCCO : | Casablanca | . | . | 7. 0 a.m. |
| | Rabat | . | . | 7.50 a.m. |
| | Tangiers | . | . | 9.45 a.m. |
| SPAIN : | Malaga | . | . | 11.20 a.m. |
| | Alicante | . | . | 14.10 p.m. |
| | Barcelona | . | . | (sleep the night) |

Second Day

| | | | | |
|----------|---------------|---|---|-----------|
| | Barcelona | . | . | 5.45 a.m. |
| FRANCE : | Perpignan | . | . | 7.10 a.m. |
| | Toulouse arr. | . | . | 8.25 a.m. |

In summer, when the days are long, the air mail leaves Casablanca and arrives at Toulouse on the same day—1,150 miles in 13 flying hours.

From Le Bourget (Paris) I travelled to Croydon in a Handley-Page machine of the Imperial Airways Company (pilot, Mr. F. Dismore). This voyage from Morocco commemorated my seventieth birthday.

I can recommend any wine friends who contemplate visiting Spain to take the air post, which is much quicker than the trains. The aeroplanes are open, with no cabin but only a shield in front for protection from the wind, so that it is necessary to have warm, thick coats, goggles and a fur cap.

CHAPTER XXXIII

VINTAGES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

CHAMPAGNE VINTAGES

1900. The quantity of grapes gathered was very abundant, far greater than in ordinary years. Very good vintage year.

1901. Vintage occurred in rainy weather, but was very abundant; quality good.

1902. The vines flowered late and under unfavourable conditions. Thin wine.

1903. The grapes were gathered under very bad conditions, owing to heavy rains. Wines of ordinary quality.

1904. The vintage proceeded under favourable conditions. Wines of very good quality and above the average in quantity. Very good vintage year.

1905. The summer was not favourable to the vine and the 1905's were only of average quality.

1906. The summer was most favourable to the vines and the grapes were gathered in very fine weather. Very good vintage year.

1907. Owing to heavy and continuous rainfall, the vintage proceeded under the worst possible conditions. Wines of ordinary quality.

1908. The worst year within living memory. Both the leaves of the vines and the grapes were attacked at the same time by mildew—a most unusual occurrence.

1909. The vintage began on September 30th, later than usual, and the grapes were gathered in rainy weather. The wine, however, improved greatly and was of good quality.

1910. The whole of the crop was destroyed by mildew and other vine diseases—a disaster without precedent.

1911. A very hot summer was most favourable to the vines. Not for many years had there been such a splendid vintage—the best since the beginning of the century. But the quantity was very small.

1912. The spring weather was most suitable, but a sunless summer followed, and the vintage did not come up to expectation. Ordinary wine.

1913. Frosts in April and a poor summer made the vintage a late one. Wine of fair quality.

1914. Military operations retarded the gathering in the Mountain of Reims, but in the Marne district the vintage took place under good conditions. Quantity not large, but quality good. Wines similar to the 1884 and 1904 vintages.

1915. In the Marne district the vintage again took place under good conditions. The quantity was larger than the year before, and the quality was very good. Good vintage wine.

1916. Owing to rain and cold in May and June, the quantity was very small and the quality very ordinary.

1917. Quantity small, but quality excellent, with much bouquet.

1918. Quantity small, but quality that of an average year.

1919. Hot, dry summer, suitable for the vines. Quantity abundant and quality very good.

1920. The gathering was done in glorious sunshine, the grapes were sound, and the wine is of good quality.

1921. Wine of exceptionally fine quality, though April frost caused so much damage to the vines that the crop was below the average. One of the best vintage years.

1922. Owing to bad weather, the quality of the grapes was below the average.

1923. The crop was very small and the quantity far under the average. Good quality, however.

1924. Quality suffered owing to the bad summer.

1925. The summer was not favourable, and several vine diseases and insects wrought great damage; the quantity was, therefore, far below the average. Glorious weather during the gathering improved the quality somewhat, but the 1925 will be rather an average wine.

1926. Good average quality, but quantity below normal.

CLARET VINTAGES

1900. The quantity in many places was as plentiful as in 1893. Very good wines—soft, silky and with fine bouquet.

1901. Quality very poor.

1902. Quantity far below the average, but quality good.

1903. Severe frosts in April did enormous damage to the vines, and a severe hailstorm in July completely devastated a very large area of vineyards.

1904. The weather throughout was fine and warm, with now and then a little rain, sufficient to benefit the vines. The grapes were perfectly matured. Fruity and stylish wine.

1905. Towards the end of August the fine weather broke up, and there was practically nothing but incessant rain afterwards.

1906. Late spring frost and a great summer drought in the Medoc. The wines are of full body, but they are still a little hard and require keeping longer.

1907. Light, delicate wines, very smooth and of good bouquet.

1908. Quantity very small in the Medoc. The grapes were very sweet, and the only fault with them was the thickness of the skin.

1909. Crop much below the average, the produce of the Gironde being about one-third of normal.

1910. The fine weather came too late to do much good. Quality very poor and thin.

1911. Very good wines—soft, fruity and of good

bouquet. They should be consumed as soon as possible, however.

1912. After one of the mildest winters on record, vegetation was naturally very forward in the spring. The quantity was considerably larger than at first anticipated, but the wines are somewhat green and lacking in sugar.

1913. The early promise of an abundant vintage was not realised.

1914. The quantity was slightly under the average, but the wines are stylish and flavoury. White wines of this year are good.

1915. The spring and summer were not favourable, and the yield was small. But as the vintage took place under good conditions, some useful wines were made.

1916. The crop was smaller than originally expected, but big wines, with plenty of colour and body, resulted. They are reminiscent of the 1906 wines.

1917. Hail, brown rot and insect pests impaired the quantity, but fine weather afterwards produced wines of good quality.

1918. Satisfactory both in quantity and quality. The wines lack softness, however, and are still a little hard.

1919. Very good wines were made in this year.

1920. The grapes were gathered under favourable conditions, and the wines have turned out good.

1921. Notwithstanding frosts and drought, something like an average crop was secured, and some of the wines are very good.

1922. Most of the grapes were gathered in the

fine weather of the latter half of September. The yield was above the average.

1923. Quality better than in the preceding year.

1924. Despite exceptionally bad weather during the summer, musts in some districts showed good promise, and the 1924's have, in fact, turned out very good wines, with softness, style and body—superior, perhaps, to the 1920's.

1925. The weather was cold and wet in August and early September; the vintages did not begin until mid-October. Quantity below the average; quality will be medium.

1926. Wine should be better than last year, but quantity deficient—only about a third of a crop.

BURGUNDY VINTAGES

1900. The crop was very abundant, but the yield was damaged by heavy rains. Light, soft wines.

1901. Very bad wines; very green, and lacking in body and maturity.

1902. Bad wines; light and green.

1903. Quantity small, quality poor; hard, dry wines.

1904. The grapes ripened well, and vintage operations took place in splendid weather. The wines of this year are very good; stylish and soft.

1905. Very bad weather during the vintage; all the wines were green, lacking in body and, in fact, most inferior.

1906. The temperature throughout the summer was all that was required for making a good wine. At the time of gathering, the grapes were in splendid condition, full of sugar and free from disease. The wines of this year are *perfect*, possessing both body and style.

1907. A fine September partially redeemed an indifferent summer. Grapes perfectly ripe, but quantity small. The wines lack body, but have nice bouquet and they improve with age.

1908. Although weather conditions were most capricious from early spring till autumn, the wines were not quite so bad as was expected. Light and green.

1909. Hard frosts in spring were succeeded by rains in July and August. One must go back quite fifty years to find so bad a year both for quantity and quality. Very bad wines.

1910. Crop entirely lost. This was a great disaster, following on the small yield of the preceding year.

1911. Quality nearly equal to that of 1904 or 1906. Excellent wines.

1912. Brilliant vintage weather came too late to redeem an unfavourable season. Quantity small; quality bad. Wines lack body and breed.

1913. Cold and rain prevented the grapes from ripening properly. Exceedingly bad wines.

1914. Quantity only medium, but quality above the average. The wines have breed, but not much body.

1915. The grapes were in superb condition and the vintage took place in the best possible circumstances. The wines are *perfect*—full, fruity and of good colour. The best vintage for twenty years.

1916. Not a great vintage year, but decent wines—light and stylish, though with insufficient body.

1917. Half an average crop, generally of very poor quality. Small yield of fine wines.

1918. Conditions were very favourable for the vintage. Quantity moderate, quality a little better than 1917. Wines light and dry.

1919. Vintage in beautiful weather. A good year. The wines are very fruity and stylish.

1920. The grapes ripened well and the vintage was completed under excellent conditions. The wines are of good quality, softer than the 1919's, but with less body.

1921. Spring frosts wrought considerable havoc in the vineyards. The quality is uneven, alcoholic

strength being low in some wines and high in others. But the best wines show much breed and a nice bouquet, though lacking in backbone.

1922. Just before the vintage the weather turned wet and cloudy. Consequently, although the quantity was abundant, the quality was poor. The wines are light, green and dry.

1923. Quantity exceedingly small, but quality very good. Beautiful wines, nearly as good as 1915.

1924. Little sunshine during the summer and bad weather during the vintage. Rather pleasant wines, however, which are developing well, though not very soft.

1925. Not more than half the usual harvest, owing to the prevalence of the *cochyliis* in certain places. Quality very poor, the wines being very light and dry, hard and astringent.

1926. Cold weather at the flowering and long summer drought reduced the quantity to about a third, but quality promises well. Hardly any Chablis at all.

COGNAC BRANDY VINTAGES

1900. Plentiful vintage of good quality and high strength.

1901. Quantity short and quality bad. Rain in August made a poor grape.

1902. Vintage started earlier than usual. Strength low.

1903. Small vintage, far below 1900 in quantity and quality.

1904. Quantity fully up to 1900, and in many cases larger. Quality very fine.

1905. Quantity shorter than last year and wines less alcoholic.

1906. Crop good and plentiful.

1907. A quarter less than last year.

1908. Vintage not a large one.

1909. The vineyards suffered somewhat from the hard spring frosts, and in the summer months the weather was not fine enough to repair the damage.

1910. Crop not plentiful. Most of the wine was required for consumption, and very little was distilled for Cognac Brandy.

1911. Quality very good.

1912. An average yield. Quality excellent.

1913. Quality good.

1914. Excellent vintage both in quantity and quality.

1915. Fine weather helped the quality, but the quantity was below the average.

1916. Owing to the great demand for wine for military use, and the high prices charged, it did not pay to distil brandy this year.

1917. Quality good, but owing to high prices there was very little distillation.

1918. Quality good and quantity a good average, but prices were still high.

1919. Quality good.

1920. Not a plentiful vintage, but the quality was good.

1921. The yield was less than last year, but the quality distinctly superior.

1922. Heavy vintage; prices under the average.

1923. Small vintage; quality fair.

1924. Average year; good quality.

1925. Very small vintage; quality high, and prices also.

HOCK AND MOSELLE VINTAGES

1900. Good in quality and quantity.

1901. Large crop of useful wines.

1902. Indifferent in both quality and quantity.

1903. Only half a full crop of Hock.

1904. A very fine vintage indeed. The 1904 Hocks and Moselles rank among the famous years.

1905. The gathering of the grapes began earlier than was desirable, on account of the rainy weather.

1906. The Rhine vineyards were attacked early in the year by various insects, and the crop was practically nil. On the Moselle things were better, and a fairly good vintage, both as regards quantity and quality, resulted.

1907. Fair quality and quantity, except in a few situations.

1908. Grapes full of saccharine and quality very good.

1909. After a brilliant flowering and a fine spring, cold and wet weather set in during the latter part of the summer and autumn.

1910. Little of the vintage was saved and the few grapes that could be gathered were deficient in ripeness.

1911. The grapes ripened quickly and perfectly. Quality very good.

1912. The blossoming took place under favourable conditions with a prospect of plenty of fruit. An exceedingly damp summer caused the grapes to grow very rapidly but sunshine was lacking.

1913. Quantity very small.

- 1914. Small quantity, moderate quality.
- 1915. Abundant vintage of excellent quality.
- 1916. Small yields of poor quality.
- 1917. Vintage of more than average quantity and very good quality.
- 1918. Large yield of poor to moderate quality.
- 1919. Average yield of useful wines.
- 1920. Abundant quantity of very good wines.
- 1921. Good yield of first-class wines; quite an exceptional year.
- 1922. Very large yield of moderate wines.
- 1923. Small quantity of nice, flavoury wines.
- 1924. Good quantity of moderate wines.
- 1925. Somewhat smaller quantity than in 1924, but of a better quality.
- 1926. May frosts and July rains reduced crop to about a third of normal, but late summer sunshine should result in decent quality.

PORT VINTAGES

1900. The weather was fine on the whole during the picking. A good vintage year.

1901. Quantity small. Wines made at the commencement of the vintage were thin, but those made at the end were distinctly better.

1902. Warm weather produced a good grape in fine wine districts, but in poorer districts the ravages of *oidium* and cognate diseases were immense.

1903. Production small; not more than half the average quantity of wine was made.

1904. The show of grapes was the best for many years. A good vintage year.

1905. The absence of seasonable warmth in the summer resulted in a certain greenness in the wine and short quantity.

1906. The summer was hot and dry, and the grapes suffered considerably from drought.

1907. Unprecedentedly bad weather prevailed just at the picking. The rain was incessant and the grapes were swollen with water and lost much in bouquet and richness. Quality very bad indeed.

1908. The weather was wonderfully favourable, the heat giving plenty of sweetness to the grapes, with the result that the wines show most valuable qualities. Certainly the finest year since 1896. Quantity quite up to the average.

1909. The vines suffered from drought, but the weather at the vintage time was everything that could be desired, and some useful wines for lodge purposes resulted.

1910. Quantity considerably below the average.

1911. Some good wines were made, but the quantity was less than in the previous year.

1912. The vintage was later than usual, owing to the prevalence of unusually cold weather in August, but the grapes presented a fine, healthy appearance. Good vintage year.

1913. Quantity less than usual, but sound, useful wines for lodge purposes were made.

1914. The vintage was carried out in the most favourable weather. Quantity below the average, but quality very fine.

1915. Some very useful wines were made, but the quantity was not large.

1916. Favourable weather. The wines of this year are good.

1917. Although the grapes were backward, owing to want of heat in the earlier part of the summer, the quality turned out very good. The wine of this year was shipped by most houses as a vintage.

1918. Quality deficient and quantity small.

1919. Average quantity, but the wines have not turned out so well as was hoped.

1920. Splendid vintage weather, after nice rains had improved the quality of the grape. Though the quantity was much less than in 1919, the wines turned out good.

1921. Quality fine, but owing to the lack of rain the quantity was small.

1922. The vintage was carried out in very fine, dry weather. A good vintage year.

1923. The weather was fairly fine, and the grapes quite healthy. Good wines.

1924. The grapes were gathered under dry and favourable conditions, and fine wines resulted.

1925. All through the early part of the year the weather was very unsettled, but two fine, bright months improved the quality of the grapes.

1926. Terrific summer heat dried up the grapes, reducing the crop considerably. Wine should be good, however.